DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 268 039 SO 017 028

TITLE In Search of Mutual Understanding: A Classroom Approach to Japan.
INSTITUTION Indiana Univ., Bloomington. Social Studies Development Center.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-943804-59-0
PUB DATE 85
NOTE 76p.
AVAILABLE FROM Social Studies Development Center, Smith Research Center Indiana University, 2805 East Tenth Street, Bloomington, IN 47405 ($3.00).
PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Asian Studies; *Cross Cultural Studies; Foreign Countries; Foreign Culture; *Geography Instruction; Instructional Materials; Learning Activities; *Religion; *Second Language Learning; Units of Study
IDENTIFIERS *Japan; Japan United States Textbook Study Project

ABSTRACT

An activity book is designed to address problems and oversights in classroom coverage of Japan discovered by the Japan/United States Textbook Study Project. Activities which focus on Japanese religion, language, and geography address two important questions: what immediate application does the textbook study have for classroom teachers and how can the work of scholars involved in the project find its way into daily classroom routine? Following an introduction and foreword, material is presented in 15 parts. "Culture Overview" provides a background reading on Japan for teachers. An introductory lesson on Japanese society and culture provides a pretest of student knowledge about Japan. A reading for teachers on Japanese religion is followed by a working outline for a lecture on religion and two student activities: organized vs. folk religion and religion in the modern Japanese family. A teacher reading on the Japanese language is complemented by Japanese language and pictograph activities for students. A geography overview for teachers is followed by four student activities: similarities and differences among the Japanese, a comparison or Japan and other Asian countries, earthquakes in Japan, and a look at facts and myths about Japan. A final section provides guidelines for going beyond this booklet. (LP)

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In Search of Mutual Understanding

A classroom approach to Japan

SO017028

Social Studies Development Center
and the
Center for Teaching International Relations

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Printed in the United States of America
ISBN 0-943804-59-0

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INTRODUCTION

Mutual understanding between nations depends not so much on the policies of governments as on the images which the peoples have of one another. The foundations of many of these images are laid in school; and the content and methods of teaching about other peoples are likely to determine whether these images are rich and varied or oversimplified, narrow, and out-of-date.

This publication reflects the authors' belief that the quality of future relations with Japan, as with other nations, depends in large measure on the images of other nations that young people develop.

A Classroom Approach to Japan, based upon the findings of the Japan/United States Textbook Study project, offers a variety of lessons, exercises and activities designed to help teachers in their efforts to provide students with accurate, up-to-date information and impressions about Japan. Focusing on major human activities such as religion, language and education, this publication suggests a variety of ways to make teaching about Japan more interesting.

We hope the information, lessons and activities contained in A Classroom Approach to Japan will be of interest and value to teachers faced with a most important and difficult task -- teaching about other cultures and peoples.

The Japan/U.S. Textbook Study Project was funded by a grant from The Japan-United States Friendship Commission. Research and writing of this book were made possible, in part, by a grant from the government of Japan through its Embassy in Washington, D.C. In addition, we are grateful to the office of Charles von Loewenfeldt Inc., San Francisco, for its valuable assistance.

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FOREWORD

This booklet, A Classroom Approach to Japan, is based on the findings of the Japan/United States Textbook Study Project. As the title--A Classroom Approach to Japan--suggests, it is designed to answer two important questions: (1) what immediate application does the study have for classroom teachers and (2) how can the work of scholars involved in the project find its way into the daily classroom routine? Close attention, therefore, has been paid not only to the recommendations and prescriptive measure of the study, but also to the realities of the precollege curriculum and setting. The practical application of almost two years of scholarly effort is the unifying theme.

The seeds of the Japan/U.S. Textbook Study Project were first planted in 1977 when the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) cosponsored, with the Japanese Education Ministry and other Japanese agencies, two study tours to Japan for selected NCSS members. The idea of a textbook study is not new; indeed, UNESCO has been promoting multinational textbook studies for decades. Although we live in a media-saturated society, textbooks continue to play an important role in forming both teacher and student attitudes. Textbooks, therefore, largely determine the instructional agenda.

In an effort to examine and to improve the treatment Japan and the United States accord each other in their respective textbooks, the Japan/U.S. Textbook Study Project was established. The Japan Textbook Research Center and the International Society for Educational Information in Tokyo and the National Council for the Social Studies in Washington, D.C. have jointly sponsored the project. To achieve its goal, the project exchanged and reviewed selected, widely-used history, geography and social studies textbooks from upper and lower secondary social studies courses in Japan, and from middle, junior high school and senior high school courses in the U.S. A total of fourteen Japanese and twenty-eight U.S. social studies textbooks were exchanged and reviewed by specialists in the fields of history, geography, civics and social studies. Before being exchanged, the passages in each book relating to Japan, the United States, or relations between the two were marked and translated. In the U.S., publishers were invited to participate in the study and contribute review copies of their textbooks. Only one of the invited publishers declined.

Even a quick scanning of the project's final report, A Classroom Approach to Japan, reveals the need for supplementary classroom materials. Although the overall purpose of the study project is to improve the quality of textbooks used in both nations, this is a long-range goal that is at least somewhat hampered by the high cost of textbook production and revision. Supplementary materials, therefore, provide a flexible, more readily and widely available vehicle for the dissemination of the textbook study findings. This booklet, then, is meant to be used as a supplement to the classroom textbook.

The topics chosen for this book correlate with the findings of the textbook study. Religion has been treated fully in this publication since most U.S. textbooks were judged woefully inadequate in their explication of Japanese religious behavior. Most textbooks simply boldly assert that the majority of

Japanese practice two religions, Buddhism and Shinto. Typical U.S. students, largely grounded in a Judeo-Christian referent, find such a simplistic statement confusing if not incomprehensible. Information provided here, therefore, focuses not only on Shinto and Buddhism separately, but also on their delicate balance in the lives of most Japanese.

Emphasis on the Japanese language has been included in an effort to address a deficiency outlined in the final report of the President's Commission on Foreign Languages and International Studies--Strength Through Wisdom. Japanese, termed a "least commonly taught" language in the United States, is usually absent from the typical U.S. high school curriculum--in contrast to the ubiquitous English language classes found in Japan. The textbook study findings confirm the deficiencies found in the President's Commission. Numerous oblique references to the Japanese language in U.S. textbooks create and reinforce the image of an exotic, if not absurd language, beyond the grasp of English speakers. Perhaps the height of this absurd image is found in one textbook assertion that the term Tokyo was derived from Kyoto--through a simple switch of the "letters!" This book, therefore, attempts to present an initial study of the Japanese language. Mastery of simple language concepts and important cultural clues are within the grasp of any students using this booklet.

Further, geography is stressed. In this section an attempt is made to differentiate Japan from the rest of Asia (which is often not done in U.S. textbooks) and to present diversity within Japan. For example, one textbook proclaims that Japan (which spans a full 20 degrees of latitude) has a subtropical climate! When one realizes that the northern end of Japan is as far north as Green Bay, Wisconsin or Montpelier, Vermont, and hosted the Winter Olympic Games in 1972, the phrase "subtropical climate" seems somehow inadequate in describing the climate of Japan. Further, much of the material in U.S. geography textbooks is out of date. For example, urbanization, traffic fatalities, pollution, and earthquakes are all topics that are either distorted or incorrect. One text even implies that running water and electricity are relatively new features in Japanese homes! Numerous pieces of data and classroom application activities in the geography section attempt to remedy these misconceptions.

Finally, it should be emphasized that this material was designed to aid students in understanding the development of Japan into the unique Asian nation and society it is today. An attempt has been made to show that Japanese ways are not necessarily right or wrong or better or worse that U.S. ways, but rather a suitable response to particular cultural needs and conditions.

CULTURE OVERVIEW

READING FOR TEACHERS

Now is the time to make a dream come true . . . (the) Orient.
Mysterious and exotic, paradise and adventure.
Admire Bangkok's gilded palaces, watch classical dance
performances or simply be charmed by exquisite
Thai silk.
There's Malaysia with its ancient temples and Bali with
its inviting beaches
And, in Japan, you can experience true hospitality at a
traditional tea ceremony.

Many Americans' mental images of Asia ("the Orient") are centered on the bizarre, the exotic, the mysterious. This is understandable in view of the exaggerations found in numerous advertising campaigns. Historically, these exotic images of Asia began when the early Europeans spread the news by word-of-mouth after learning about these distant lands. The above sampling of travel ads is a typical modern example of this legacy. By definition, however, "Orient" is a neutral word which has no emotional overtones. It merely refers to the eastern part of the horizon where the sun rises. Yet for the early Europeans it was the direction in which the "new" lands lay, and, thus, those lands became known as "the Orient," a Western label and referent. For the Europeans this area includes the Asian nations spanning from Pakistan to Japan, including, India, Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, People's Republic of China, Republic of China, Korea, and the nations along the Himalayan border area.

Despite accessibility to current data about Asia, the stereotypical images of the past are often still perpetuated. Thus, for the American lay public and students it is seldom an easy task to objectively understand Asian countries, peoples, and religions. Coming from a Judeo-Christian referent, many Westerners are unable to discern the unique aspects of Asia. For example, Western civilization spread from Europe to the Americas, incorporating many divergent elements, yet still retaining an underlying Judeo-Christian religious tradition. In view of this experience, Westerners tend to look for a similar monolithic development in Asian civilization. The Asian experience, however, followed a different developmental pattern. Although some similarities evolved (especially between India and China) differences also developed. The history of Asian nations shows that they developed more or less independently of each other and remained relatively autonomous. Hence all-inclusive labels such as "Oriental peoples," "Eastern societies," and "Oriental civilizations" actually refer to the phenomenon of multiple Asian characteristics or qualities. It would be just as absurd for people to include all the divergent components of North and South America (from the Patagonians of Argentina to the Eskimos of Alaska) under the monolithic label "American". Thus an effort should be made to develop sensitivity in recognizing the uniqueness of each Asian country.

Even today, while we must recognize the great influence the West has had on Asia within the last 200 years, it cannot be said that modern day Asia has become absorbed by the spread of Western civilization. Upon a closer look, we find that each one of the civilizations and peoples in Asia has had a long history with occurrences similar to those found in Western history--war (revolution and counter-revolution), peace, growth and decline of empires, invasions, population shifts and religious movements. Here again, the Asian experience cannot be explained simply.

INTRODUCTORY LESSON TO JAPANESE SOCIETY AND CULTURE

STUDENT ACTIVITY

This activity is a good method for assessing your students' knowledge or misunderstanding about Japan before starting your unit/course. These strategies can be used to study either Japan or a variety of cultures.

Objectives:

To assess students' awareness of Japan through their answers to specific questions about Japan.
To encourage student participation through class discussion of the questions and their answers.
To increase student awareness of modern Japanese society by asking specific questions about Japan.

Grade Level: Upper elementary grades (above-average ability), junior and senior high school

Materials: Handout #1, "Can You Guess Which Country?"

Procedure:

1. Distribute the student handout to each student.

2. Instruct them to read quickly each question and write down the country which answers the question.

3. When it appears that the students have completed their task, survey the class and record on the chalkboard the total number of countries a student has identified on his/her worksheet. Also, keep a tally of the number of students who have identified the same number of countries. This part of the lesson will hopefully demonstrate the understanding or misunderstanding your students have about Japan.

4. Next, read each question aloud and ask the class for their answers; list each different answer on the board.

5. Allow time for students to discuss their reasons for answering items the way they did.

6. Finally, tell the class that all the answers should be "Japan."

7. Collect the student papers for teacher assessment of students' knowledge or misunderstanding of Japan.

CAN YOU GUESS WHICH COUNTRY?

What country is it where:

1. people did not drink milk until the 1900s?
2. some of the walls in many homes are paper-covered, sliding screens?
3. 98 percent of the homes have a TV?
4. most of the farm equipment is small in size and used on tiny plots of land?
5. they export more cars than any other country in the world?
6. only 16 percent of the land can be used for farming?
7. the most popular sport is baseball?
8. in the traditional theater males play all of the female roles?
9. 80 percent of the people are cremated when they die?
10. one million people arrive and depart from the capital city's railroad station each day?
11. most people sleep on mattresses on the floor?
12. the first thing one is served at a formal meal is a warm washcloth?
13. 100 percent of its aluminum, 99.8 percent of its oil, 98.4 percent of its iron ore, and 66.4 percent of its wood is imported?
14. most decisions are made by consensus?
15. workers save nearly 20 percent of their earnings?

Adapted from: "Ethnocentric Counterpoint"
Dennis Horn, Wabash Junior/Senior High School
Wabash, Indiana

(Mr Horn was one of twenty U.S. social studies educators who traveled to Japan in the summer of 1980 as guests of the Japan Institute for Social and Economic Affairs. The U.S. sponsor was the National Council for the Social Studies.)

16. many workers have "lifetime employment" with the company they begin with?

17. unemployment rarely exceeds 2 percent?

18. people rely on fish for 50 percent of their protein requirements?

19. the Constitution states that the people "forever" renounce war as a means of settling international disputes?"

20. the crime rate is only 1/5th that of the United States?

21. 67 percent of the imports are raw materials and 97 percent of the exports are manufactured goods?

22. they represent the No. 1 customer for U.S. farm products?

23. there are 240 student days in the school year?

24. many of the elementary and junior high students are responsible for cleaning their own school rooms?

25. most elementary and secondary students have a school uniform which they must wear each day?

26. workers take only about 60 percent of the time-off allowed them each year?

RELIGION OVERVIEW

READING FOR TEACHERS

Just as "Orient" has previously been discussed as an incorrect appellation for the realities of Asia--Asian "religions" continues to be an inadequate or inappropriate term. "Religion" is a Western concept involving a set of doctrines incorporating the existence of an omnipotent being, or of supernatural powers which determine the fate of mankind and nature. This concept of religion may not be applicable in the Asian world where "religion" usually encompasses all aspects of life for individuals as well as for social groups. At the same time, there is little or no difference between what is sacred and what is secular. In Asia, there are a multitude of "religions"--from exalted schemes of mysticism to odd superstitious beliefs and practices (from a Western frame of reference).

In an oversimplified approach, the major Asian "religions" could be categorized into two main groups--"ethnic religions" and "world religions." The first category refers to certain ethnic or indigenous groups of people such as India's Hinduism, Japan's Shintoism, and China's Taoism and Confucianism. The latter category includes Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity. These are "universal" if the following criterion is followed: each holds that the religious meaning of life and the world cannot be achieved from the experience of a limited number of people or cultures. Unlike Western religions, it is important to note that Asian "religions" of both categories have cross-fertilized throughout history. The result has been a subtle transformation of the various "religions." Further, while on the one hand Asian spiritualism produced philosophical men such as Gautama Buddha, Confucius, and Ghandi, on the other, it gave birth to fierce warriors who plundered the lands, such as Genghis Khan and Tamerlane. Nevertheless, Asians have managed to preserve their traditional spiritual views in the face of many sociopolitical upheavals throughout the ages.

The "religious" history of Japan provides a good example of the perpetuation of the traditional with noticeable traces of the new. In the course of history, Shinto, the traditional "religion," has undergone many changes under the influence of Confucianism, Buddhism, and many other religions and quasi-religious systems. Nevertheless, Shinto has always been important to the religious, cultural, and national life of Japan.

SHINTOISM

While Shinto has no sacred scriptures as do other major religions, some of its basic tenets are found in two historical writings (compiled in the eighth century), the Kojiki ("Records of Ancient Matters") and the Nihonshoki ("Chronicles of Japan"). According to the Shinto mythologies, in the beginning deities married (as male and female) and out of this union came mountains, rivers, seas, plants, animals, human beings, and numerous other deities. The myth of the Imperial Family's divine origin is traced back to the most important deity, the Sun Goddess Amaterasu. She is enshrined in the

Grand Shrine of Ise. Scattered throughout Japan are other deities worshipped in various shrines numbering nearly 80,000.

Overall, Shinto is not concerned with doctrines. However, it does positively assert the basic goodness of human nature and of the world. Evil, in Shinto, is little more than a lack of beauty and harmony. Moreover, good can be reestablished by ceremonial cleansing. Shinto, being a communal "religion," stresses the cooperative efforts and celebrations of the family clan, village, and nation on holy days and public festivals instead of individual beliefs and decisions. "Religious practice" centers on the worship of Kami--spirits or forces of nature, departed ancestors strong enough to help or harm in rice farming, sickness, and all other human problems, as well as heroes, emperors, and a few scholars. Furthermore, in sharp contrast to the American principle of separation of church and state, Shinto professes that religion and state are inseparable.

BUDDHISM

About the middle of the sixth century, Buddhism (imported from Korea) brought about changes in people's basic "religious" beliefs. The previous folk religion had been a blend of the animism and fertility cults of the agricultural tribes in Japan. After the introduction of Buddhism, called "the way of Buddha," Shinto, heretofore unlabeled, came to be called "Shinto," the "way of the kami (gods)." After gaining Imperial favor, Buddhism was spread throughout the country by the authorities. Once Buddhism took hold, however, Shinto remained subordinate for centuries.

Buddhism, although often identified as a "Japanese" religion, is an import from India by way of China and Korea over the course of many centuries. The religious founder was Prince Siddhartha (also known as Gautama and Sakkyamuni). He was a minor prince who was born near the present Indian-Nepal border about five centuries before Christ and was roughly the contemporary of Confucius. He was reared in royal Indian tradition, trained as a warrior, married, and fathered a son. However, as the story goes, despite his almost "perfect" existence, he was greatly troubled by the human pain and suffering he saw all around him. As a result, he abandoned his comfortable life and sought spiritual happiness. At the age of thirty-six, after years of trial and error, he finally attained enlightenment, gaining the title "Buddha" (the "Enlightened One"). He spent the rest of his life, forty-five years, spreading his teachings in northern India. Buddhist tenets are based on the belief that all of life is filled with pain, anguish, and suffering caused by mankind's craving for impermanent things. Salvation, or nirvana, can only be gained when people eliminate the causes of suffering by following physical, mental, and spiritual disciplines. From a humble beginning, with a corps of lay teachers, great systems of Buddhist doctrine, philosophy, art, and multitudes of scriptures developed.

Over the centuries many sects and subsects emerged. The three most dominant groups are: (1) Theravada, "the Tradition of the Elders", based on one's own efforts and generally practiced in South and Southwest Asia; (2) Mahayana, "the Great Vehicle", faith-oriented and found in East Asia; and (3)

Mantrayana, "the Esoteric Vehicle", most commonly identified with Tibetan Buddhism. These three are Indian in origin but through time became established in other parts of Asia. Ironically, Buddhism disappeared almost entirely in India by the tenth century A.D.[1]

In Japan during the Heian Period (794-1185 A.D.), Buddhism took on a new dimension because of two great monks, Saicho (767-822 A.D.) and Kukai (744-839 A.D.) They made pilgrimages to China and each introduced a new religious sect. Saicho imported Tendai and Kukai established Shingon. The diversity of Buddhism from its earliest times is comparable to Christian sectarianism. In the early ninth century, Japanese Buddhism entered a new age, catering mainly to the court aristocrats and contributing to the cultural growth of the nation in general. From the nineteenth century Shinto and Buddhism were, in effect, blended together, and many features of Buddhist beliefs and practices were assimilated into Shinto. For example, today each Buddhist temple in Japan seems to have a small Shinto shrine somewhere on its grounds, and Shinto shrines have (Buddhist) altars. Most Japanese homes include religious trappings from both religions, displaying a miniature Shinto shrine and a Buddhist altar. Often Buddhist gods and Shinto kami seem interchangeable. There is a saying that every Japanese is born and named with Shinto ceremonies,[2] conducts himself as Confucian, and dies and is memorialized as a Buddhist. In contrast, although Western Christianity also combined a diversity of elements, once they had been assimilated, Christianity became exclusive; practices of other faiths were not permitted.

The Feudal Era, also known as the Kamakura Period (1185-1333), saw the downward spread of Mahayana Buddhism which had previously been restricted to the aristocracy. This occurred in an age of great political unrest and social confusion for the people, thus paving the way for Japanese Buddhism. Buddhism in Japan generally preaches salvation in Paradise for everyone, rather than the attainment of one's self-perfection alone. During this period the first major effort to reach out to the people (warriors and commoners alike) was made by Saint Honen (1132-1212) who brought about the establishment of the Pure Land Sect. According to this branch, the clergy were permitted to marry. It thus brought Buddhism closer to the common people. Honen's appeals to the masses were further carried out by his disciple, Saint Shinran. In time the Pure Land Sect became the most widely practiced branch of Buddhism in Japan. Also popular in this period was the Lotus Sect, or Nichiren (the name of its founder). Nichiren (1222-1282) also appealed to the common folk. This sect was frequently at odds with others because Nichiren was a spirited man who

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1 Buddhism has continued to spread, and while most Buddhists are to be found in Asia a small number is scattered throughout the world with a significant number being in the United States, mainly of Japanese descent, in Hawaii. Further, Buddhism in the West has assimilated Western church practices more so than in Japan, i.e., scheduling weekly (usually Sunday) worship services, Sunday school classes, and adult and youth programs, activities, and organizations.

2 Joyous Shinto rites also include marriages.

would not compromise his strong religious beliefs. In recent times, the teachings of Nichiren have inspired the more militant "new religions" of Japan.

The next major period in Japanese religious history was the Ashikaga, or Muromachi Period. The period between 1336 and 1573 is considered the "golden age of Zen Buddhism." Its influence, however, was cultural rather than religious in the strict sense. Much of what non-Japanese would readily identify as being Japanese culture can be traced to this period. Zen, more than any other Buddhist sect, has been the object of much publicity, reflecting its great intellectual and aesthetic appeal to Japanese and non-Japanese alike. There is great attraction to Zen because of its amalgamation of Indian intellectualism, Chinese utilitarian culture, and the Japanese sense of aesthetics.

Beginning in the Edo or Tokugawa Period (1600-1868), seeds of a strong nationalistic movement began to take root with Japanese leaders using Confucianism to encourage the study of Japanese history and things indigenous. Scholars of the nationalistic Shinto school known as kokugaku, or "national learning," insisted on the superiority of Shinto thought over all imported teachings, including Buddhism. Thus the vitality of Buddhism was largely lost along with the decline of the social and political power of Buddhist monasteries and temples, and of the religion's cultural influence in general amidst the peace and comparative material security gained under the Shogunate's strong governmental control.

Thus, by the Meiji Restoration (1868-1912), the government was ready to issue an edict distinquishing Shinto from Buddhism. From that time to the end of World War II, Shinto was a de facto state religion with the shrines receiving government subsidies. Immediately after World War II, under the U.S. occupation, "State Shinto" was dismantled and Shinto shrines lost their government support. As a result, in the postwar period, many small shrines or less popular shrines (without much private support) were unable to continue their operations and were forced to close.

Since the conclusion of World War II, "new religions" have gained momentum. Some are based on Shinto while others are related to certain sects of Buddhism. Still others are of mixed religious orientation. Many have a variety of social and cultural activities within their own closely-knit religious circles. Some also engage in political activities.

Today, under the present Japanese Constitution, Shinto has no official status of any kind. Nevertheless, it continues to play ceremonial and symbolic roles in many aspects of Japanese life. The majority of the Shinto shrines are organized under the Jinja Honcho (Association of Shinto Shrines), with the Grand Shrine of Ise at the apex of the hierarchy.

Although the status and forms of the religions keep evolving, the ties between the ancient and the modern will probably never be severed. Just as the new religions of Japan have looked to the past for guidance and inspiration in

Nichiren's teachings, they have also adopted the form and spirit of many sectarian Shinto denominations which can be traced to messianic or healing cults in folk religion.

CONFUCIAN INFLUENCE

Under the rule of the Yamato Court in the fourth century, Chinese influence by way of Korea began to be felt in Japan. Besides transplanting Buddhism by this means, Confucianism was also imported. Considered and referred to as a Chinese "religion," "Confucianism" is an applied Western label, whereas East Asians refer to it as "the teaching of the scholars." Confucianism represents the teachings and traditions of Confucius[3] who lived about 551 to 479 B.C. He was a teacher by profession, holding a minor government position in his province. Living in unsettled and decadent times he felt compelled to initiate social reform, based on his ideas of moral philosophy. His efforts were unsuccessful but his teachings left lasting influences on Chinese, and later Japanese, society. Although Confucius did not pretend to be a messiah, prophet, or even a philosopher, he transfused tradition with a new spirit. He felt that anyone could be educated enough to understand the "Will of Heaven." Basic to Confucian teaching is the harmonious operation of five relationships, i.e., between father and son, ruler and subject, husband and wife, elder and younger brothers, and friend and friend. Being so family-oriented, Confucian ethics stressed the virtue of filial piety and the cult of ancestor worship. Along with semi-religious ethics, the strict observation of proper social ritual and etiquette, Confucianism is not a true religion but a system of morals, ethics and politics based on loyalty, duty and obedience. It centers on the idea of the family with the father (emperor) as the head. These elements have been observed throughout Japan's lengthy history. However, its influence has somewhat declined since World War II.

CHRISTIANITY

Of the major world religions, Christianity was the last to appear on the Asian, as well as Japanese, scene. Moreover, it has had a checkered history in Asia. The first recorded contact with Japan goes as far back as the sixteenth century when Portugal was expanding its overseas empire in Asia. Goa (on the Indian subcontinent) became a bishopric in 1538 and an archbishopric in 1557 with jurisdiction over Malacca, Cochin, Japan, and China. Even the Inquisition was introduced there in 1560. In 1542, the world famous Jesuit, Francis Xavier (1506-1552) arrived at Goa, and from there he carried on a missionary campaign in Japan. In 1549, Spanish Jesuits brought Christianity to the shores of Japan where it flourished. It was an age of internal strife and upheaval. The new religion was welcomed by those who needed a new spiritual symbol as well as by those who wished to gain trade benefits or new Western technology, especially advanced firearms. With the unification of the

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[3] Confucius is the romanized version of K'ung-fu-tzu or Master Kung.

nation under the Tokugawa reign, however, the authorities suppressed all avenues for further change and banned Christianity in 1589 as subversive to the established order. They feared that Japan would be colonized by Spain or Portugal. The ban was in effect until the Meiji era when it was lifted.

In the modern period Christian missionary activities in Asia followed, initially, the expansionist moves of European colonial powers. In the last 100 years, however, many European and American missionaries (both Catholic and Protestant) have established their evangelistic, educational, and philanthropic endeavors beyond national boundaries. More significant in recent decades, perhaps, is the emergence of the indigenous Christian churches in just about every part of Asia, including Japan. Christianity is still not free from the label "foreign," unlike Buddhism and Confucianism. Japanese Christians,[4] like other Christians of Asia, are taking an increasingly active part in the social, cultural, and political life of their own nation. In all Asian countries (except the Philippines--the only Christian Asian country), including Japan, however, the Christian population remains very small. Nevertheless, the Christian influence on Japanese society in modern times has been very great. As a group, Japanese Christians rank among the best educated leaders in society and have thus had a disproportionate amount of influence on their fellow citizens. Also, as an important element in Western civilization, Christianity has attracted much interest and curiosity. Thus it would be quite accurate to say that educated Japanese would probably have a clearer understanding of Christian history and Christian dogma than they do of Buddhism because the former would probably have been part of their course of study as significant world influence, whereas Buddhism would not normally be included.

Up to the present, the ability of the Japanese to accept and to assimilate foreign religious influences often astounds Western religious practitioners since their own religious practices are exclusive rather than inclusive. Often they adhere to their own beliefs to the point where they are intolerant of others. Thus they would probably find the analogy of Japanese religions to a tree (which is credited to Prince Shotoku), as being highly inconceivable.[5] According to the analogy, Shinto is the roots of a tree which are imbedded in the very heart of the Japanese people. Confucianism is the trunk and branches of politics, morality, and education, and Buddhism is the flower of religious feeling which emerge as the fruits of spiritualism.

Until recently, the innateness of Japanese religious life in daily existence was evident and easily confirmed. However, industrialization and the concomitant rise in the standard of living since the end of World War II has created attitudinal changes. According to recent surveys, Japanese, especially youths, have attitudes similar to those of Western industrialized societies concerning religion and personal values. The findings also reflect an

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[4] Protestants and Catholics are about equal in number with Protestants numbering slightly more among Japanese Christians today.

[5] Prince Shotoku is considered the greatest statesman of the seventh century who also developed much of early Japanese civilization.

orientation shift from rural to urban. For example, many Japanese now consider personal desires of the highest priority while rejecting any religious ties. Their shift in attitude is seen in the fact that although the Japanese population has greatly increased over the last century (tenfold), there still are the same number of temples and shrines. Financial support for major temples and shrines has declined so much that these institutions have resorted to building apartment houses on their properties to replace their shrinking income. In Japan, as in the West, the more affluent the people become the more self-centered they also become. Further, fast-paced urban life allows little time to indulge in religious matters. In contrast, in rural areas the neighborhood temple or shrine serves as the community gathering place.

Many feel that a substantial number of Japanese regard religion in the Western sense, i.e., dogma and practices. This could partly account for the high percentages of survey respondents who often claim no religious affiliation or a vagueness about their religious inclinations.

Therefore, the Japanese appear to have reached a comfortable economic level but have neglected their spiritual needs. A Japanese newspaper survey (Yomiuri Shinbun 1979), however, reported that Japanese youth seem to be experiencing a religious "awakening." Increasing numbers of young people have participated in traditional religiously-oriented activities over the past decade. This newest trend appears to be a reaction to the serious upheavals which occurred in Japan over a five-year period, beginning with the 1973 "oil shock." Thus, Japanese youth, while the beneficiaries of a highly technological society, still feel a void in their lives. Many Japanese say that when there is a new trend the Japanese pursue it to the extreme. Perhaps today many Japanese realize that their nation, a people with a long-standing tradition of spiritualism interwoven into their daily lives, needs to reach an equilibrium between the new wealth and old spiritualism. Disenchanted or dismayed with the formal religious institutions, Japanese youth may skirt them and seek personal direct communication with the divine.

Thus religious life, although a long standing Japanese tradition, is still continuing to evolve today as it has in the past. At the moment, the ultimate shape of this evolution remains clouded by confusion and uncertainty.

A WORKING OUTLINE FOR A LECTURE
ON RELIGION

"RELIGIOUS" INFLUENCES IN JAPAN--PAST AND PRESENT

I. Background information

   A. The Western (Christian) concept of "religion" contrasted with the Asian concepts

   B. The basis of misunderstanding among Westerners of Asians and especially Japanese

II. Categorization of the major Asian "religions"

   A. "Ethnic" or indigenous religions

   B. "World" or universal religions

   C. Cross-fertilization of Asian "religions" throughout history

III. Shinto (Japanese)--a good illustration of historical cross-fertilization of "religious" influences

   A. Background information on Shinto

   B. Introduction of Buddhism in Japan in the sixth century and its effects

   C. Resurgence of Shinto and its effects

   D. Confucian influences

   E. Christian influences

IV. Role of "religion" in modern, urban Japan--a continuing evolutionary process

EXPLORING THE CONCEPT OF ORGANIZED RELIGION VS. FOLK RELIGION

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Lesson Overview: This activity will attempt to explore what knowledge students already have about religion. They will be asked to describe or explain aspects of organized religions found in the U.S., and the way Native Americans worship (it is assumed that Native Americans have already been studied). By the end of this activity, students should be able to identify the major differences between organized religion and folk religion.

Objectives:

To make a generalized definition of organized religion through class discussion.
To make a generalized definition of folk religion.
To define "religious expression" and forms it can take within any given culture.

Grade Level: Junior and senior high school

Materials: Chalkboard or overhead projector
Chalk or pen

Procedure:

1. Through teacher-directed discussion, help students to realize that they have at least a rudimentary conceptualization of organized religion and folk religion. To elicit student response, the following questions should be asked (write responses on the board and group them according to similarities, e.g., goals, places of worship, etc.)

   In every community, and oftentimes neighborhoods, we see churches, temples, or other places of worship. What word or words come to mind when you think about these places of worship? (One response should be "religion.")

   What is meant by "religion?" What are its goals?

   What forms does it take (e.g., missions, revivals)?

   Who practices religion? How often? Where?

   Are there any special tools or things that are used in a religion? If so, describe these things and their uses.

   Are there any special occasions observed?

Who directs or manages the religion? Is the person(s) male or female? Is special training required?

How is the religion carried on from one generation to the next?

2. If the above questioning does not include comments about Native Americans' worship practices, ask the class similar questions about Native Americans.

3. When you feel ample responses have been given and recorded on the board, ask students to look at the recorded responses. Then ask them to come up with category labels for similar characteristics, e.g., religious days or observances, saints or holy people, god(s), religious book(s).

4. Next, direct their attention to the practices of Native Americans and organized religions. Ask:

   Is the way Native Americans worship similar or dissimilar to the way, for example, Christians worship?

   Are the practices of Native Americans very similar or quite different from some of the practices listed in #1 above? (Students will probably answer in the negative.)

   What seems to be the greatest difference or differences?

5. At this time write "organized religion" and "folk religion" on the board and give students a general definition of these two terms, pointing out examples of each from the list on the board.

Background Definitions:

Anthropologists usually refer to the general concept of religion as a belief that tries to explain how the universe is ordered and people's place in that system. Religion, therefore, describes relationships of people to unexplainable forces that influence their lives--providing people with faith, hope, and security in the face of the unknown, the unknowable, and the unpredictable.

In formal or organized religion, i.e., the institutionalized form which most people conceptualize when they think about religion, we find:

1. A personal commitment to and serving of God or Gods with worshipful devotion; conduct in keeping with divine commands (tenets) as found in sacred writings or declared by authoritative teachers; a way of life recognized as an obligation of the believers; and usually the identification of oneself with an organized group of believers.

2. A body of institutionalized expressions of sacred beliefs, rituals, and social practices found within a given cultural context.

In folk religion we find:

1. Certain ideas (beliefs) of natural and supernatural forces, a set of rituals and often "specialists" (healers) who deal with the forces of life, but not usually organized in a formal structure.

2. Animism (animus--Latin for "soul"), also referred to as nature worship or having animistic beliefs, the belief that the soul or spirit (power) animates, or gives life, to living things.

Background Information on Native American "Religions"

The term "Native American" is a problematic one. Native American people were, and are, culturally and physically diverse. They spoke 2,200 different languages of which about 250 survive today.

Each Native American society had its own well-established culture and religion, and doctrines varied greatly from group to group. For example, some groups had numerous kinds of priests and religious leaders (the Natchez), while others (the Ojibwas) had no special religious leaders (each man and woman was a kind of "priest").

Although it is important to make students aware of this diversity, some general class discussion can take place by focusing on the unique "world view" held by almost all Native Americans. Most Native Americans view the universe as a harmonious whole, with every object and being having life. Therefore, to separate human beings from nature is contradictory. This "world view" fosters a deep respect and reverence for the earth, and an awareness of each individual's relationship to the universe. Jack Forbes has summarized this belief:

1. the earth our mother is holy and should be treated as such;

2. all forms of life are our brother and sister and have to be respected;

3. life itself is a holy, sacred experience;

4. we must live our lives as religion, that is, with constant concern for spiritual relationships and values;

5. we must live lives that bring forth both physical and spiritual "beauty."[1]

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[1] Jack D. Forbes, "Teaching Native American Values and Cultures," in Teaching Ethnic Studies: Concepts and Strategies, ed. by James A. Banks (Washington, D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies, 1973), pg. 208-209.

These powerful guidelines for daily living and "religious" practice were a continuous source of conflict when the Europeans arrived. European cultures could not easily comprehend either the view of the earth's sanctity or the concept of "sharing" it without outright ownership.

It is hoped that a discussion of Native American religion will enrich the study of Shinto and increase understanding of the more universal concept of folk religion. Again, it is important to underscore the diversity of the population, and where possible, to discuss specific groups and their practices.

Teachers wishing to focus on the Ogalala Sioux holy man, Black Elk, may obtain a lesson plan from the Indiana Religious Studies Project, Sycamore Hall 230, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47405. Simply request complimentary copies of Black Elk Speaks and Native American Religion.

THE ROLE OF "RELIGION" IN A TYPICAL JAPANESE FAMILY

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Lesson Overview: In this lesson students will redefine "organized religion" and "folk religion" and decide which term more accurately describes religion in Japan. Students will read about the "typical" but fictitious modern Japanese family--the Nakamuras. Students will be able to clarify and rethink their understanding of "organized religion" and "folk religion" while they learn about one very important aspect of Japanese life.

Objectives:

To make a general definition of "religion" in terms of established religion.
To give a general definition of "folk religion" and contrast it to established religion.
To analyze the fictitious account of a typical modern Japanese family and its religious practices and then determine the nature of "religion" in Japan.

Grade Level: Junior and senior high school

Materials: Chalkboard or overhead projector
Chalk/pen
Handout, #2 "The Role of 'Religion' in a Typical Japanese Family"

Procedure:

1. Write on the board "organized religion" and "folk religion" (the two terms students were given yesterday), and ask for volunteers to review the definitions aloud for the rest of the class.

2. As you distribute Handout #2 to the class, instruct them that they will have to:

   (a) read about the fictitious, but representative modern-day family called the "Nakamuras" and learn what religious practices a "typical" Japanese family follows during the course of a year;

   (b) draw a conclusion about which term, "established religion" or "folk religion," best fits the worship practices of most Japanese based upon the Nakamuras; and

   (c) be able to give supporting evidence for their conclusion.

3. After each student has received a handout, you might want to pronounce the Japanese names and words for the class (refer to the section in this book on the Japanese language for a pronunciation guide).

4. Have the students read the handout.

5. When the class has completed their tasks (about fifteen to twenty minutes), ask the students for highlights of the story about the Nakamuras. (Do not worry if the students' remarks do not immediately focus on the "religious" practices). After a few minutes, however, direct the focus of the discussion to the point of the reading--the religious aspects of Japanese life.

6. Suggested questions are:

   Do the religious practices of the Nakamura family resemble yours?

   How are they alike? Different?

   What seems to be the major difference between religion in Japan and the United States?

   Do Japanese practices more closely resemble Christianity in the U.S. or Native American worship practices?

   Which label or term, then, is better suited for the Japanese situation?

Follow-Up:

1. If you are located in an area where Japanese immigrants settled, arrange for a class excursion to a Buddhist temple or Shinto shrine and speak with the minister or priest. Students can then find out how Buddhism or Shinto is practiced in a U.S. community--services rendered, whether they hold worship services and/or what differences exist between religion in Japan and religion in the U.S.

2. Use the sample lesson Shinto: The Traditional Religion of Japan by Carol Sue Lehman, West Middle School, Martinsville, IN. and Lois Marie Miley, Rogers High School, Michigan City, IN., Summer 1980, available free of charge from the Indiana University Religions Studies Project, Indiana University, Sycamore Hall 230, Bloomington, IN 47405. One lesson focuses on Shinto in Japanese mythology, poetry, and festivals, the other on background material.

THE ROLE OF "RELIGION" IN A TYPICAL JAPANESE FAMILY

The following is a characterization of the place Shinto, Buddhism, and Confucianism would have in a representative, although fictitious, Japanese family. In this family called "Nakamura" (the Japanese equivalent of Jones and Smith in the U.S.) there are five members (typically) in the family: father, mother, son, daughter, and grandmother (who is father's mother).

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The family of Nakamura Eiichi,[1] like most Japanese families, begins the New Year (Shogatsu) by getting up early in the morning, getting dressed in their finest clothing, and paying a visit to the local Shinto jinja (shrine). This is one of the few times during the year that they have a reason for wearing their fine kimono (their formal Japanese garment). Mr. Nakamura chooses to wear the traditional men's kimono, which is of a dark subdued color but of a rich weave, and matching obi (sash). It would appear that the kimono is of one color, but upon closer examination, one would see a subtle pattern woven into the fabric. His outfit would be completed with the wearing of his tabi (Japanese socks) and geta (clogs).

Nakamura-san's[2] (Mr. Nakamura's) wife, Shizue, and their daughter, Shizuko, are also dressed in their finest kimono with beautifully embroidered, wide-banked obi. Shizuko is especially excited this morning because her new kimono is a nonverbal announcement of her "coming of age"[3] into young womanhood and no longer being a child. She also had her hair styled at a local beauty salon in a fashion suitable for young women. Shizuko and her mother will also don tabi and pretty zori (slippers) to complete their wardrobe.

Shizuko's brother Ichiro wears his black school uniform with white dress shirt, black school cap and shoes. His schoolmates will also wear their school uniforms for this special occasion.

The family gets into their Japanese-made compact car and drives over to the shrine. It is very crowded today, everyone coming for the same purpose--to seek the blessings of good fortune for the New Year.

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1 This is the name of the father, in the Japanese manner in which the family name is listed first, then his given name, typically given to the eldest son . . "ichi" designating "number one."

2 Polite Japanese way of addressing people; they do not say Mr., Mrs., or Miss.

3 At about 15 or 16 years of age.

The first thing the Nakamuras do is stop at a small structure, accessible from both sides, with faucets and trough. Here they go through a ritualistic cleansing, washing their hands and rinsing out their mouths, then drying their hands with the handkerchiefs Japanese invariably seem to have with them. Then they proceed to a larger structure with thick bell ropes hanging from the rafters. Standing in front of these ropes, the Nakamuras take out some coins and toss them into the large coin collection box, ring the bells by pulling strenuously upon the ropes, and clap their hands together loudly to attract the attention of the kami (gods). Then they say silent prayers for the New Year.

Before leaving, they stop at the stands which sell o-mikuji (slips of paper with fortunes written on them) and ema (wooden picture tablets with a written fortune). After reading their paper fortunes they tie their o-mikuji onto the nearby bush, which already bears many other people's fortunes. They do this to insure the good luck fortunes they have drawn will be fulfilled, or that the bad luck fortunes will be banished. The Nakamura children make sure they hang their ema[4] on a bush too, because they all want good luck for their exams. Another purchase Ichiro insists upon making is at the o-mamori[5] (amulets or good luck charms) vendor. He wants to take his o-mamori with him when he and his classmates go on their annual school excursion to a distant prefecture.

As the Nakamuras leave the shrine, they have thoughts about the festivities in store for them over the next few days since the Nakamura clan members, from far and near, will gather at their home to celebrate the New Year. They will feast on special New Year's foods. The children will receive o-toshidama (New Year's money) from the adult relatives. There will be much merriment.

As the New Year progresses, the Nakamuras pay visits to their ancestral graves, usually attached to a neighborhood Buddhist tera (temple). There are three times during a year when they make these visits--during the spring and fall equinox (O-Higan) and during the summer (O-Bon).

At each of these times, before leaving home, the Nakamuras check to see if they have everything--sake (rice wine) or special foods, flowers, (usually chrysanthemums), candles, incense, matches, and o-juzu, or prayer beads. The family drives over to their neighborhood Buddhist temple. The Nakamuras will first locate their family's grave markers, place the flowers in jars or flower bins, leave the sake or foods and, perhaps, perform rituals of purification by pouring water over the markers. They remove any rubbish or weeds around the

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4 Ema can be bought only at New Year's, while o-mamori and o-mikuji can be bought at any time.

5 Japanese nouns and verbs often will be preceded with an honorific "o-" syllable to indicate respect.

graves. Lastly, they will light the candle and place it at the foot of the gravestone; then each member of the family will light some o-senko (incense or joss sticks), and say a personal prayer for the departed family members while individually pressing their hands together with the o-juzu draped over the hands.

It is not until July or August that the family clan gathers again. During the O-Bon (memorial) season, many workers are given about a week's vacation to return to one's furusato (ancestral home). Originally begun as a Buddhist observance to welcome back and comfort the spirits of ancestors, O-Bon today has the air of a festival, although old rituals and traditions are practiced.

Grandmother Nakamura, at the dinner table one night, reflects upon her long life. She states that life has been good to her--she had a good and kind husband and obedient, respectful, and successful children. As she looks upon her grandchildren she says she is thankful for having well-mannered and studious grandchildren unlike some neighborhood children. Recently she has heard of cases where older children have talked back to their teachers, showing little or no respect toward their elders. Mr. and Mrs. Nakamura agree with Grandma; the schools have instilled in their children proper ethics toward the family system. Ichiro, in good Confucian style, has already assured his parents that he will look after their welfare in their old age, unlike what has begun to happen among some neighborhood families--placing the elderly family members in geriatric centers. Grandma in her reverie admonishes both Ichiro and Shizuko always to maintain the butsudan (Buddhist altar) and kamidana (Shinto god shelves) in their own homes when they themselves are adults. Ichiro will inherit his family's butsudan when his parents die.

In November, on the fifteenth, the Nakamuras observe younger families dressed in their finery taking the children to the jinja. This is Shichi-Go-San Festival, or the "Seven-Five-Three Festival," celebrating the survival of all three-year-old, five-year-old, and seven-year-old girls. On this day families give thanks to the gods for looking after the children and ask for continued blessings. The elder Nakamuras feel nostalgic as they recall similar trips taken in years past with their own children.

As the year nears its end there is commotion in the Nakamura household when a grown grandaughter, Ritsuko, visits with her distraught parents. They have come to Grandmother for some wedding advice. Things would not be so frustrating if the wedding plans did not have to be so rushed, but her fiance just received orders to report to his new assignment in the United States by the first week of the New Year. Grandmother understands the problem immediately. There are not many days left from which to choose. Between the days that people will be going to year-end parties and getting homes cleaned and ready for the New Year, there are also lucky and unlucky days to consider. To insure that the marriage gets off to a good start a taian (lucky) day must be chosen. The days to avoid are the butsumetsu (unlucky) days, which are associated

with Buddha's death. As Grandmother gets out her "book" which she religiously consults for important family events, she thanks the gods for another good year.

Thus the Nakamura family completes the year's cycle. They began the New Year in a festive mood and will have a happy occasion to end it. This is a very good omen according to Japanese beliefs. Perhaps even better fortune will meet the family in the New Year ahead.

THE JAPANESE LANGUAGE OVERVIEW

READING FOR TEACHERS

Is it truly very difficult to master the Japanese language? Yes!

Is it equally as difficult for Japanese to learn foreign languages? Yes!

The issues inherent in these statements will be addressed in the following pages. In order to close part of the language gap between themselves and the rest of the English-speaking world, the Japanese have been relying heavily upon literal translations. Yet translations often distort the original messages by omitting subtle nuances in the English language. Even simple errors are made when the translator's knowledge of the language falters. On the other hand, considering that modern Japan is a nation of substantial world standing, one may wonder about the concomitant problem of Japanese printed matter in the world. Unfortunately, there is little interest in translations of Japanese material, with the exception of Japanese literature. As a result, therefore, only a small amount of Japanese written information is available in translation.

While Japanese translations of foreign printed matter may suffice in the area of cultural, intellectual, and sociopolitical trends, the paucity of proficient English speakers among the decision-makers of Japan has had serious repercussions on the international power scene. Although small in size, Japan is the second largest industrialized/trading democracy in the world. Moreover, it holds the key in the "first world's" (democracies) relations with the socialist "second world," and the emerging "third world." However, Japan's language barriers with all these sectors is greater than those of any other major nation. Very few of its politicians and government officials, businessmen, or intellectuals can speak comfortably with their counterparts in other nations.

Many people point out that other nations are not much better in their foreign language proficiency, e.g., Australia and the United States. Yet these two groups have an advantage over the Japanese since English, somewhat by default, has become an international language. There is little incentive, therefore, for people in English-speaking countries to learn foreign languages. Conversely, countries such as Japan are forced to learn English in order to accommodate the English-speaking nations.

Although there seems to be some disagreement in the literature about the difficulties of the Japanese language for non-native speakers and vice versa, many linguists believe Japanese has one of the most complex writing systems in the world. The following information outlines the difficulties encountered in learning to write Japanese. In addition, reasons will be offered for the difficulties the Japanese face in learning foreign languages.

As mentioned earlier, Japanese is one of the most complex writing systems in the world. Since the Japanese adopted the Chinese character system, one might assume that the two languages would have much in common. Although there are

some commonalities, e.g., ability to read the same characters in either language, there are also differences. When Chinese writing was introduced into Japan, Japanese scholars adapted it to their own indigenous language. This was a difficult task because Japanese is a multisyllabic language with many verb inflections, and Chinese is a monosyllabic language, i.e., one syllable per character with almost no inflections. Throughout the ensuing centuries, further evolution of the language occurred. As an end result of this adaptation, two greatly differing linguistic systems exist today so that people schooled in either the Chinese or the Japanese language will not be able to recognize by ear what they read (as long as characters are used).

Presently, 1,850 kanji (Chinese ideographs) must be mastered in order to graduate from high school. This number was adopted by law as being vital for everyday use and normal communication. Compared to its original number, the Japanese language has been greatly simplified by this identification of essential characters. Nevertheless, the task is still difficult for many non-Japanese.[1] Further, in special fields (especially technical ones) and in Japanese literature, additional characters (ancient) are used since many feel they convey more precise meanings.

The most recent form of writing infused into contemporary Japanese language is romaji ("Roman characters"). During the United States occupation of Japan after World War II, it was expected that the authorities would insist on converting Japanese writing to Latin letters. But this did not occur. Romaji are often found when foreign words are used, especially on signs, menus, or advertisements.

One does not master written Japanese only by memorizing the 1,850 essential kanji and the various ways of reading each character. One must also be able to use them as compounded kanji. Moreover, there are still hiragana and katakana phonetic syllabaries to learn, each having forty-six characters. Briefly, hiragana was derived from Chinese characters written in the cursive style. It evolved to be used with kanji. Eventually, it gave rise to katakana, distinctively angular in form, basically used to denote foreign words. People being people, however, the Japanese use both forms of writing to create a certain visual mood or effect in newspaper headlines, business signs, or public announcements. To the unknowing reader, foreign and Japanese words may be indistinguishable from each other.

Japanese vocabulary, standing alone, gives the non-Japanese no clues as to number and gender. Only when placed in a context can a term be understood. There is no comparative degree for adjectives or person for verbs. In addition, although standard Japanese (based on Tokyo dialect) is taught in Japanese schools, the Westerner will probably encounter many dialects of the various localities. Thus the standard language which the Westerner may have learned in a formal classroom setting may (1) keep him/her at a certain social distance from some Japanese (s)he may encounter, or (2) pose a communication barrier.

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[1] Each kanji character in the Japanese language has come to have more than one way of reading it. Only by context will a reader know which of the multiple readings for the character is the appropriate one.

There is still a large area of difficulty as yet unmentioned. It is in the interconnected spheres of spoken/unspoken Japanese and protocol. First of all, most statements can be made in three ways: to express humility, neutrality, or honor. A speaker's own position and gender and that of the listener influences the way language is expressed. Moreover, word usage provides clues to other cultural imperatives. Conversational Japanese can be broken down into the following types: language that males use, language that females use, language used with subordinates, and language used with peers. For example, a daughter will use the female, respectful (honor) mode of speech when talking with her parents (her elders), but will speak in another way when talking about her parents with her friends. That is, she will use a respectful form of speech with her parents, although in a somewhat "familiar" manner (since they are part of her family), but she will use the humble form of speech when talking about them with her friends. In addressing her employer, who is her elder just as her parents are, she will use still another form of speech because their superior-subordinate roles (although not within the familiar confines of the family). Idiosyncratically, if she had a brother who talked about the very same things in similar situations, his speech would be quite different because he would be using the male form of speech.

Another area difficult for non-Japanese to discern is not necessarily what is openly said, but perhaps more importantly, what is left unsaid. Further, in Japanese, one must be sensitive to the <u>way</u> a statement is made. Nuances such as certain accents and word order in sentences could be very important. Japanese generally expect Japanese speakers to know of the subtleties of their language and to know how to use them. Otherwise, a person who is unaware of such characteristics in the spoken language could "lose face" and never regain his/her lost stature as far as the Japanese person is concerned.

This leads to yet another area of difficulty for the non-Japanese speaker. As mentioned earlier, there is a certain vagueness within the Japanese language itself. This characteristic seems to carry over into human interactions. Japanese businessmen and merchants have often been accused of skirting issues instead of giving direct answers. Westerners, especially, find such behavior disconcerting.

The key to understanding the Japanese way of arriving at decisions goes directly to the heart of their culture and system of thought. Confucian ethics and morality have shaped what is important to the Japanese way of life (previously discussed in "The Role of Religion in a Typical Japanese Family," e.g., the family, loyalty, maintaining nurturing/nurtured roles. This is evident in the manner in which one person speaks to another and the inherent expectations which accompany such social intercourse.

An example of the close link between language and cultural philosophy is found in the Japanese word <u>wa</u> or "harmony." This single word cannot be understood with a simple definition. It involves a host of values--involving the goal in life, people's role in this scheme in life, and the expectations one has of another in this human web. One explanation for an "evasive" answer by a

Japanese may be because (s)he may not wish to offend the other person and bring shame upon that person's family name (in turn, shaming all the many past generations of his/her family). If a person was embarrassed, then the harmony (wa) in nature has been disturbed.

More significantly, a Japanese person may answer in a vague way because (s)he may not feel (s)he has the authority to make the decision. This person is part of a larger group, and "the group" in Japan is based upon the concept of the ideal family integration, following Confucian family-centered values. The family model was chosen because it is the most primitive and naturally formed association among human beings. Therefore, although the Western view of business is often a far cry from the family unit, in Japan the family unit is reflected throughout business. To attain "wa" in Japanese business management, the superior is the oyabun or oya, meaning "parent." The employees are the kobun or children/inferiors. An immediate boss is the oyaji or "the old man." (Similar usages were made in feudal Japan between the shogun and his retainers as well as criminal elements, e.g., syndicate boss and gang members.) The company or organization is the ie or "house." As a family unit, then, company colleagues are united and willing to share in business and social affairs. Among Japanese, it is more important to bring about stability than to see immediate progress. Therefore, if a decision must be made, the entire group with whom one works must first be consulted; then a group decision can be reached. As this illustrates, there is a deeply-rooted rationale for the apparent indecisiveness of the Japanese.

A modern phenomenom which adds to the difficulty in mastering Japanese is the adoptive way in which foreign words, especially English, have been incorporated into Japanese. For one thing, the Japanese pronunciations of English words are greatly distorted. Furthermore, the adopted words have often taken on their own Japanese meanings, quite different from their English meanings. For example, kura ("cooler") is not an ice chest, but an air conditioner; sutobu ("stove") actually refers to a room heater. Japanese creativity with English words can be seen in the following examples: beya from besu-appu ("base up") actually means across-the-board raise in wages; and zene-suto from zenerau sutoraiki ("general strike").

Transliterations of other English words compound an already difficult situation. Following the above examples, one might assume the rickshaw, so often identified with Asia, would become "riki-sha"; however, this is one of the words which was transliterated becoming, jin-riki-sha, or literally "man-power-carriage." Two other examples are denwa, "electric speech," for telephone, and eiga, "projected picture" or movie.

Although many Japanese have studied English in school, few are able to read it with adequate proficiency. Most Japanese have hundreds of English words in their vocabulary, but these word have been so transformed in the Japanese pronunciation that most foreigners would be unable to decipher them. The converse is often true--since Japanese have been taught by Japanese teachers of English (who have had little or no prolonged contact with native English speech), they do not recognize the same familiar words.

Very simplified explanations of the language woes of Japan can be traced to two main factors. First of all, part of the reason is reflection of past and continuing governmental/educational policies regulating the manner in which the English language is taught and used. Secondly, the form and nature of the Japanese language makes it different from most other languages. Thus it is difficult for others to learn Japanese, with the reverse holding true for the Japanese.

The English language belongs to the most dispersed family of languages.[2] It falls under the category of languages called "Indo-European" which covers most of Europe and much of Asian Siberia, Iran, Afghanistan, and the Indian subcontinent, besides most of the Americas. English speakers, therefore, have the good fortune to share language commonalities with a large portion of the world. They have this added advantage besides having the international language in their native tongue.

The Japanese language, on the other hand, is thought to belong to a family of languages that is not very widespread. However, if there were similarities to other branches of its language family, the language today bears little similarity to any other. In fact, one would have to be a linguist to be able to recognize any underlying similarities.

In recent years, because most people (including Japanese) have such difficulty with the written language, many people (Japanese and foreigners alike) have advocated changing to a simplified phonetic system. Resistance to this change is being kept up by persons who advocate the characters' esthetic value and/or heritage of the Japanese people. Others resist because of the characters' ability to lend themselves to abbreviations of names and slogans. They also make good newspaper headlines and political slogans, besides aiding in speed reading or scanning printed material, since characters stand out in Japanese writing.

Nevertheless, the cultural bond which has joined the East Asian languages for centuries is slowly dissolving. In Vietnam, characters have been completely abandoned. In the People's Republic of China, many characters have been so greatly abbreviated that they are generally unrecognizable to Koreans and Japanese. In Korea, han'gul, the Korean phonetic script, is gradually replacing characters. In Japan, similar evolutions are taking place. It is thus felt in certain circles that following the trend in East Asia, the end is slowly approaching for the use of kanji in modern-day Japan.

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2 Language families have similar structure, phonetics, and parts of basic vocabulary.

JAPANESE LANGUAGE EXERCISE

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Lesson Overview: Part of the process of understanding people involves an effort to pronounce correctly and understand words from their language. Once students are taught the basic skills in Japanese, they should have the confidence to tackle any Japanese name or vocabulary word in printed matter and to use a map of Japan. Also, if students in general can master Japanese pronunciation, their skills can be transferred to pronouncing Hawaiian and other Polynesian names and words commonly used.

Objectives:

To hear pronunciation of the Japanese vowels.
To cite, in writing or orally, some of the basic rules of Japanese pronunciation.
To become familiar with the entire (basic) Japanese pronunciation guide.
To speak and understand simple Japanese words and phrases.

Grade Level: Junior and senior high school

Materials: Handout #3, "Japanese Pronunciation Guide"
Handout #4, "Three Forms of Japanese Writing: Romaji, Hiragana and Katakana"
Handout #5, "Simple Japanese Words and Phrases"

Procedure:

1. Introduce this activity by explaining, or generating discussion, about the importance of learning to pronounce words from another language.

2. Distribute Handout #3 to each student.

3. Review the five basic vowel sounds, using the Japanese pronunciations, for the class. Chalkboard utilization may help to reinforce the sounds to the respective vowels.

4. To determine whether they have the proper sounds for the five vowels, ask for volunteers to give English words they know which have similar pronunciations.

Other examples:

A	I	U	E	O
far	me	blue	bed	coat
allude	meek	boost	pet	boat
alas	meter	flew	let	wrote
aloud	Mimi	roost	let	bloated
alarm	Amy	rule	met	croak
announce	Monique	stool	bet	coke

5. Continue reviewing each section of the "Japanese Pronunciation Guide" with the class, drilling the students on each part until you can hear them generally pronouncing the sound correctly.

6. First have the students carefully look at Handout #4, so that they will be able to "visually decipher" the different forms of the Japanese language. Next, have them practice pronouncing the syllables.

7. Finally, encourage the students to attempt the pronunciation of some simple Japanese words and phrases listed on Handout #5.

JAPANESE PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

It may be difficult to master the written Japanese language, but it is fairly easy to learn the pronunciation of some terms. Keep in mind the following basic rules of pronunciation, and with practice, you may be understood by a native Japanese speaker.

Syllables: Japanese (language) is a phonetic syllabary, i.e., it is spoken by using syllables.

1. Japanese words usually have several syllables.
2. Each syllable usually ends with a vowel.
3. Syllables are given equal stress.

Vowels:

1. There are five vowel sounds in Japanese: a, e, i, o, u. Your teacher will pronounce each one for you.
2. Each vowel has only one sound.
3. If a vowel is doubled or has a line over it, it means the sound is to be prolonged in duration, or the sound is doubled--BUT THE SOUND DOES NOT CHANGE (e.g., Tokyo - Tokyo or Tookyo).

(Anyone planning to pursue serious Japanese language studies should know that the meanings of certain words in Japanese will change depending upon whether the vowel has a long or short sound. Also, some short vowel sounds are not voiced at all in certain positions within a sentence or word. However, these two considerations will be left for advanced language students.)

Vowels Placed Side-By-Side: In most cases, each vowel will be pronounced individually.

Examples:	Vowels		English word	Japanese word
	ai	=	kaiser	samurai
	ei	=	reign	geisha

The Letter Y:

1. "Y" is not a separate vowel.

2. When it is found between a consonant and a vowel, all three letters make up a single syllable, e.g., Kyushu = cue shoe. Notice that each vowel has a sound and always the same sound.

Consonants:

1. Consonants generally follow the same rules as in English.

2. The consonants in Japanese are: k, g, p, b, t, d, c, z, s, r, h, m, n, and a nasal "n" sound (pronounced by itself).

3. Letter "g" is always a hard "g," as in "gum."

4. Letter "j" always has the sound as in the word "judge" or as in "Japanese" and "Genji."

5. In the combinations of "ch," "sh," and "ts" each letter is not a separate sound, but the two are pronounced as one sound, as in:

   ch = church; chikatetsu (chi-ka-te-tsu)

   sh = shirt; Shikoku (Shi-ko-ku)

   ts = boats; matsu (ma-tsu)

6. Double consonants--no two consonants are found together except:

   the doubling of the same consonant, e.g., kk, pp, tt is not pronounced as a single sound, but having a slight pause (glottal stop) between them, as you would say "bookkeeper."

   if one of them is an "n" as in "Kanto."

Semi-Vowels: Besides the semivowel "y," there is also the letter/sound of "w," which is the same as in English.

Intonation:

1. Instead of having fixed accents, Japanese words are pronounced smoothly with a slight variation in intonation.

2. There are no hard and fast rules to follow--intonations must be learned individually and change occasionally, depending upon what precedes or follows them.

Pronunciation And Order Of The Japanese Syllabary: The Japanese would ordinarily write all these sounds as Japanese cursive writing, but for now we will learn their syllabary using romaji (Roman alphabet). The first chart will help you to practice the Japanese sounds. In keeping with Japanese reading tradition, begin with the column on the farthest right and read the column. Keep proceeding from right to left.

The second set of syllables gives the variations of the basic sounds. Try to master these sounds as well by reading from the right-hand column, top to bottom and moving from right to left.

THREE FORMS OF JAPANESE WRITING: ROMAJI, HIRAGANA, and KATAKANA

BASIC SOUND											VARIATIONS				
a	ka	sa	ta	na	ha	ma	ya	ra	wa	n	ga	za	da	ba	pa
あ	か	さ	た	な	は	ま	や	ら	わ	ん	が	ざ	だ	ば	ぱ
ア	カ	サ	タ	ナ	ハ	マ	ヤ	ラ	ワ		ガ	ザ	ダ	バ	パ
i	ki	shi	chi	ni	hi	mi		ri			gi	ji	ji	bi	pi
い	き	し	ち	に	ひ	み		り			ぎ	じ	ぢ	び	ぴ
イ	キ	シ	チ	ニ	ヒ	ミ		リ			ギ	ジ	ヂ	ビ	ピ
u	ku	su	tsu	nu	fu	mu	yu	ru			gu	zu	zu	bu	pu
う	く	す	つ	ぬ	ふ	む	ゆ	る			ぐ	ず	づ	ぶ	ぷ
ウ	ク	ス	ツ	ヌ	フ	ム	ユ	ル			グ	ズ	ヅ	ブ	プ
e	ke	se	te	ne	he	me		re			ge	ze	de	be	pe
え	け	せ	て	ね	へ	め		れ			げ	ぜ	で	べ	ぺ
エ	ケ	セ	テ	ネ	ヘ	メ		レ			ゲ	ゼ	デ	ベ	ペ
o	ko	so	to	no	ho	mo	yo	ro	o		go	zo	do	bo	po
お	こ	そ	と	の	ほ	も	よ	ろ	を		ご	ぞ	ど	ぼ	ぽ
オ	コ	ソ	ト	ノ	ホ	モ	ヨ	ロ	ヲ		ゴ	ゾ	ド	ボ	ポ

NOTE: 1. The top line is "ROMAJI."

2. The middle line is "HIRAGANA," which is used in daily writing with "KANJI."

3. The bottom line is "KATAKANA," which is used for writing foreign words.

SIMPLE JAPANESE WORDS AND PHRASES

Greetings

Good morning.	: Ohayō gozaimasu
Good afternoon.	: Konnichiwa.
Good evening.	: Konbanwa.
Good night.	: Oyasuminasai
Good-bye.	: Sayōnara
Thank you.	: Domo arigato.
(Thank you very much)	: (Domo arigatō gozaimasu)
Don't mention it.	: Dō itashimashite.
I'm sorry.	: Gomennasai.
Hello. (on the phone)	: Moshi, Moshi
Excuse me, but ... (addressing someone)	: Sumimasenga...
How are you?	: Genki desuka.
How do you do?	: Hajimemashite.
Mr. (Mrs., Miss) (Last name)	: (Last name)-san.

Introduction

I am __A__.	: Watashi wa __A__ desu.
My name is __A__.	: Watashi no namae wa __A__ desu.
We are Japanese.	: Watashitachi wa Nihonjin desu.
She (He) is an American.	: Ano-hito wa Amerika-jin desu.
They are teachers.	: Ano-hitotachi wa sensei desu.
I am glad to meet you.	: Dozo yoroshiku.

Teacher: Sensei

Principal: Kōchō-sensei

Student: Gakusei

Useful Expressions

I want to	: Watashi wa .... tai desu.
- go to Ginza.	: - Ginza-e-yukitai desu.
- telephone	: - denwa-o-kaketai desu.
- buy some stamps.	: - kitte-o-kaitai desu.
Do you have ....?	: .....ga arimasu-ka?
Do you understand English?	: Eigo-ga wakari masu-ka?
How much is it?	: (Sore wa) Ikura desu ka?
Where is the restroom (washroom)?	: Toire wa doko desu-ka?
Please give me some water.	: Mizu-o kudasai
Please say it again.	: Moichido itte kudasai.
Please wait a moment.	: Chotto matte kudasai.

FROM PICTOGRAPHS TO CHINESE CHARACTERS:
THE EVOLUTION OF KANJI (WRITING)

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Lesson Overview: A lecture-demonstration is used in this lesson designed to give the student a brief history of the development of the most difficult form of writing in Japanese--kanji. A few basic rules of writing kanji and illustrated examples are included (these are optional).

Objectives:

To define "pictograph."
To become familiar with differences between kanji, and both hiragana, and katakana.
To recognize at least three Japanese kanji and identify, by labeling, the order of the strokes which formed each complete character and the meaning of the character.

Grade Level: Gifted upper elementary; junior and senior high school

Materials: Chalkboard or overhead projector
Chalk or pen
Overhead transparencies or photos/pictures, or poster-size replications of early writing systems from different civilizations (although optional, these are strongly recommended.)
Teacher Lecture Notes

Procedures:

1. Ask students how the early inhabitants of earth recorded impressions or made personal statements about their lifestyles or environment. How could we describe their "writing"? (Many were pictures or pictographs.) Ask for examples of these early "writings" (e.g., hieroglyphics of Egypt, petroglyphs of Polynesians/Hawaiians, cave drawings in France, etc.)

2. Students will probably be able to answer the preceding questions; therefore, summarize their discussion by defining "pictograph" for them.

3. Write "kanji" on the board in romaji, and continue by explaining that kanji are Chinese characters--symbols the Japanese borrowed from the Chinese to establish their own system of writing.

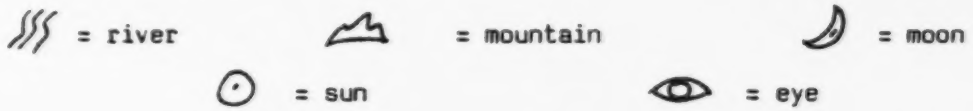
4. Using the accompanying lecture notes, or your own notes, explain that the early development of East Asian writing also began with pictographs.

5. Deliver the following lecture, noting important points on the board as you lecture. Use the examples provided in the lecture notes to illustrate the transformation of pictographs into characters.

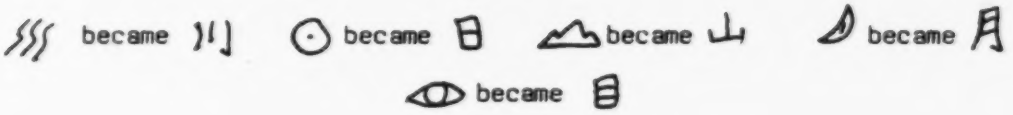
6. (Optional) Have students take out a sheet of paper and copy the strokes of kanji characters as you write them on the board, or give them a handout with the characters and the stroke order marked.

Teacher Lecture Notes:

In ancient China, early Chinese recorded their impressions of their world just as they saw them, for example:



In other words, a pictograph is a picture of what it names or describes. As time passed, from simple pictures such as these, kanji developed into stylized forms that are used today. Thus:



As such, kanji or characters, are symbols which represent an object or idea; that is, they mean something as well as having a sound. Kanji, therefore, are dissimilar to the letters of our alphabet, which have no meanings by themselves but do represent sounds. Moreover, kanji are mainly used in writing Japanese names, nouns, and the stems of verbs, adverbs and adjectives used singularly or as a combination of characters to represent a word.

Another contrast between these two languages is that there is no key to the pronunciation of the Chinese characters used in Japanese. There are a few rules which work most of the time for some characters, but generally, the only (known) way to learn which of the several pronunciations each has is the time-honored method of memorization and practice.

Also, because the written form of the character is a symbol depending upon its form and appearance, it cannot be separated into meaningful phonetic parts. An example we are familiar with in our own culture is our numerical system, e.g., "5" connotes a certain number of items whether it is pronounced "five" or "quint-" (as in "quintuple*s").

In Japanese, the problem is made even more complex because most characters have a solely Japanese pronunciation, as well as one based on the original

Chinese pronunciation. In the case of these Japanese pronunciations, unlike the previously mentioned method of learning pronunciation--through memorization and practice--this method will not work. Instead, these pronunciations depend upon context and convention.

The reason for such complexity is the process the Japanese used in adopting/adapting the Chinese characters. Briefly, they borrowed some characters for meaning, without changing their form. They also borrowed other characters, however, for their sound which resembled Japanese sound, but disregarded the Chinese meanings.

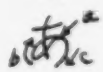
As you can see, a person would have to undertake serious study of Japanese in order to know how to pronounce Chinese characters. Less baffling, although not easy, are the general rules for writing characters. These rules depend upon the types of lines in each kanji (also applicable to the Japanese alphabet either hiragana or katakana form). The following rules are generally followed:

STROKE ORDER

1. Start from left to right *, or

2. Top to bottom.

* Which of these is to be written first depends upon the highest point of the character. That is, if a horizontal line was toward the "top" of the character, it generally is written first. For example, the hiragana and katakana forms of "a":

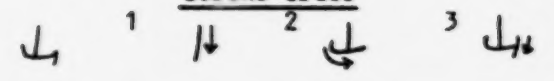
ROMAJI	a	1	2	3
HIRAGANA				
KATAKANA				

If the lines in the character are about equal in "height", then the left-to-right rule is generally followed:

ROMAJI	i	1	2
HIRAGANA			
KATAKANA			

KANJI: ROMAJI - Yama or san

ENGLISH - mountain

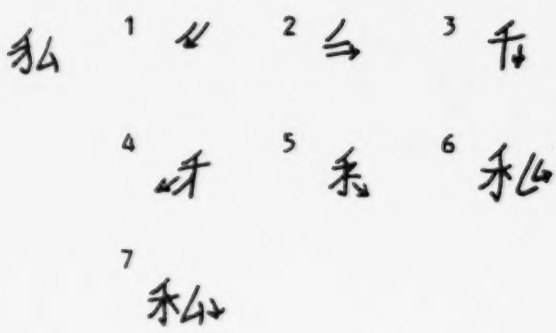


KANJI: ROMAJI - hito

ENGLISH - person, people

KANJI: ROMAJI - watakushi

ENGLISH - I, my, me



GEOGRAPHY OVERVIEW

READING FOR TEACHERS

U.S. textbooks tend toward oversimplification of Japanese geography, often to the point of distorting reality. For example, significant differences between Japan and other Asian countries are often overlooked. Diversity within Japan is also missing from U.S. textbooks. The people, the land, the climate of Japan, are not homogeneous. U.S. textbooks require updating when discussing the Japan of today, especially in light of rapid change and westernization. The following lessons concentrate on these areas. The learning strategy employed is often a comparison with other countries. Both similarities and differences are stressed as being equally important.

JAPAN AND OTHER ASIAN COUNTRIES: HOW DO COUNTRIES COMPARE?

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Lesson Overview: This lesson demonstrates techniques for comparing countries. Although economic data are used here, the same strategy can be applied to data on geography, culture, and politics.

Objectives:

To interpret data from graphs and charts.
To draw conclusions about economic differences and similarities in Asia.

Grade Level: Junior and senior high school

Materials: Handout #6, "Data Sheet"

Procedures:

1. Divide the class into groups of four and distribute Handout #6 to groups of students. Have each group examine the sheet and compare information on Japan with other countries in Asia.

2. Have groups prepare a summary statement of their findings, noting the information which supports their generalizations.

3. Have groups report to the class and list their findings on the board.

4. Have the class discuss findings and explore other questions, such as:

   What relationships exist between the different data sheet topics, e.g., is there a relationship between energy use and GNP? Why? Between urbanization and industrialization?

   What other information can be examined when comparing countries? Discuss language, religion, housing, marital customs and type of government, changes in government, and government policies.

   What would comparing literacy rates tell us about the countries economically? Politically or culturally? Why?

DATA SHEET

	Japan	Bangladesh	India	China	Indonesia	Philipines	Thailand	N. Korea	S. Korea
1. Per Capita GNP (U.S.$)	$8,870	$100	$190	$230	$460	$730	$698	$1,130	$1,550
2. Literacy	99%	22%	34%	95%	60%	72%	70%	85%	88%
3. Infant mortality per 1,000 live births	8	139	134	56	91	65	68	70	37
4. Life expectancy	76	47	52	68	50	61	61	62	66
5. Percent of urban population	76%	11%	22%	25%	20%	36%	14%	60%	48%
6. Total Exports (f.o.b.) in millions U.S.$	$152,030	$350	$4,200	N.A.	$22,420	$5,708	$6,858	N.A.	$21,254
7. Total imports (c.i.f.) in millions $	$143,299	$12,000	$6,000	N.A.	$15,560	$8,200	$9,840	N.A.	$26,131
8. Passenger vehicles in use (millions)	14,590	67	738	N.A.	307	365	253	N.A.	N.A.
9. Telephones in use (thousands)	38,698	48	1,600	N.A.	269	410	255	N.A.	N.A.
10. Per capita energy consumption*	3,679	33	218	706	218	329	308	3,072	1,020

*(These figures are the equivalent per capita consumption of kilograms of coal. That is, not all countries use coal. But whatever their source of energy, it has been figured alone in terms of kilograms of coal.)
Source of data: A combination of data from the World Bank, UNESCO, United Nations and Keizai Koho Center (Japan Institute for Social and Economic Affairs).

ARE ALL JAPANESE ALIKE?

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Lesson Overview: This lesson demonstrates the diversity of the Japanese people and compares this diversity with that of the U.S.

Objectives:

To examine the different racial and cultural groups in Japan.
To compare population diversity in Japan with that of the U.S.

Grade Level: Junior and senior high school

Materials: Handout #7, "The Japanese People"
Handout #8, "Comparison Chart: Cultural Diversity in Japan and the U.S."

Procedures:

1. Discuss the following terms with the students using U.S. population examples:

   homogeneous - of a similar type

   heterogeneous - of different types

   cultural diversity - having different cultural characteristics, music, art, language, customs, religion, ethnic heritage, etc.

   mainstream of society - the majority of the people

   What are examples of homogeneous/heterogeneous characteristics of our school? This class? Your neighborhood?

   What are examples of cultural diversity in our country? Our state?

   How would you describe the people who make up the mainstream of U.S. society (language, ethnic heritage, religion, etc.)?

2. Ask students to read Handout #7 with the following questions in mind:

   What are the different groups in Japan?

   On what basis are they different?

   How can we compare Japanese and U.S. cultural diversity?

THE JAPANESE PEOPLE

Origin

Most archeologists agree that the Japanese people are members of an ethnic group known as the Yamato race. This group gained supremacy over other warring tribes and clans during the first centuries A.D. The Yamato leaders are generally accepted as the ancestors of the Japanese Imperial family.

By the seventh century A.D. the people living on the Japanese islands had become a basically homogeneous group-a people with the same appearance, language and customs. Some aspects of diversity within their larger group are outlined below.

Diversity

Much has been written about the cultural and racial homogeneity of the Japanese people. Yet, within Japan there are diverse elements, both native and foreign.

Today there are about 15,000 Japanese who are referred to as Ainu. They are descendants of a protocaucasoid group believed to have migrated to Japan from northern Europe and Siberia during prehistoric times. It is believed that the Ainu separated from their original stock before they developed all the characteristics usually associated with Caucasians. Today they are generally distinguishable by the hairiness of their bodies, some facial features and a somewhat lighter skin pigmentation.

Although the Ainu migrated throughout the Japanese islands and intermarried, they remained an identifiable ethnic group. Today the Ainu are located primarily in Hokkaido with some further north on Sakhalin and Kamchatka (currently under Soviet control). Currently many of the Ainu are assimilating into the mainstream Japanese population although in some parts of Hokkaido cultural pluralism is fostered through the use and maintenance of the Ainu language, food, clothing, and traditional festivals.

Diversity is also found within the dominant racial composition of the Japanese, namely the two to three million Japanese called Burakumin (derogatory term--Eta). There are several theories about the origin of this group or so-called caste. Perhaps the most common and plausible one is related to occupation. In ancient Japan there were slaves living at the foot of the imperial grounds, who served as caretakers of the dead by guarding the tombs with their pet hawks (one of the favorite pastimes of the elite was the keeping of falcons). Servants who were given the task of caring for and

feeding the birds were called etori (food gatherers), abbreviated eto, from which it is believed "Eta" is derived. Although use of this derogatory term was prohibited by official edict over 100 years ago, Eta is still often used to refer to Burakumin.

During the Nara Period (710-784) when Buddhism dominated, the killing of animals was forbidden and falconry discontinued. The servants who had become skilled slaughterers as a result of their work with the carnivorous falcons became skilled butchers. When the killing of cattle and horses was finally forbidden, the Burakumin were ostracized by society. Therefore, around the ninth century, the first visible ghettoes were founded in Kyoto on marginal lands set apart for the purpose of grazing cattle and burying the dead. Most of these ghetto inhabitants worked as disposers of the dead, as cattle herders, and in other occupations thought to be defiling.

Today some Burakumin remain occupationally visible as animal skinners, tanners, leather craftsmen, and butchers. The great majority, however, are engaged in work other than that associated with their traditional occupations. Yet most Burakumin continue to live in segregated ghettos. Many stay because of complex forces surrounding their own sense of identity. For example, continuous social interaction with others will almost surely result in one's heritage becoming known. Even a person who has taken great pains to avoid situations that might lead to discrimination labors under the psychological fear that this Burakumin heritage may be exposed. This issue is one that the Japanese government continues to grapple with.

COMPARISON CHART: CULTURAL DIVERSITY IN JAPAN AND THE U.S.

Using the chart below, generalize about cultural diversity in Japan and the U.S.

CRITERIA	JAPAN	UNITED STATES
Population		
Names of groups/% of total population		
Basis of distinguishing group:		
Language		
Religion		
Jobs		
Education		

CRITERIA	JAPAN	UNITED STATES
Socioeconomic status		
Ancestry/race		
How nonmainstream groups are treated		

What generalizations can you make about cultural diversity in Japan?

How would you compare cultural diversity in Japan with that in the U.S.?

What are the effects of cultural diversity on the countries socially? Economically? Politically?

EARTHQUAKES: IS JAPAN UNSHAKABLE?

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Lesson Overview: This lesson presents the realities of earthquakes in Japan. It concentrates on student ability to review misleading information in order to find the truth about a situation.

Objectives:

To interpret conflicting data.
To explore the frequency and distribution of earthquakes in Japan.

Materials: Handout #9, "About Earthquakes"
Handout #10, "Earthquakes in the U.S."
Handout #11, "Earthquakes in Japan"
Handout #12, "News Release"
Handout #13, "Letter to the Editor"

Procedures:

1. Have students share general knowledge of earthquakes--What? Where? Any personal experience, etc. Find out if any of the students know whether there are earthquakes in Japan.

2. Divide students into groups. Each group gets a packet of materials including: #9, #10, #11, #12, and #13.

3. Have groups review materials.

4. After their review, have each group prepare a statement on earthquakes in Japan. They should be prepared: (1) to defend their statements with factual data; and (2) to compare earthquakes in Japan with earthquakes in the U.S.

5. Have each group in turn read its statement. Allow other groups to ask questions or raise points of agreement or disagreement.

6. Ask students to describe ways facts can be distorted or misunderstood.

ABOUT EARTHQUAKES

Everyone has probably read news accounts about disastrous earthquakes and has seen pictures of their destructive effects. The earth is shaken by thousands of earthquakes each year - the number is almost impossible to determine. Routinely the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) in Boulder, Colorado, locates about 8,000 quakes a year around the world. There are thousands, perhaps as many as 50,000, that cannot be detected, even by the most sensitive instruments. Of this number, only a very small percentage fall into the 'significant' category (6.5 or higher on the Richter Scale).

An earthquake is a form of energy of wave motion transmitted through the surface layer of the earth in widening circles from a point of sudden energy release - the focus. These seismic waves travel outward in all directions, gradually carrying energy (like ripples produced when a pebble is thrown into a quiet pond).

Earthquakes are produced by sudden movement, usually along fault lines. Fault lines are the edges of the huge plates that make up the earth's crust. Each plate is about 50 miles thick. There are seven plates of oceanic and continential size and about a dozen smaller plates. The plates are in constant motion and grind along each other or slip over or under each other. An earthquake occurs when pressure builds up causing the plates to shift from as much as a few inches to dozens of feet. The build up of pressure is caused by the phenomenal heat generated in the center of the earth. Eventually some rock can no longer withstand the force and may fail at a weak point - often the fault line.

Most often we refer to earthquakes according to their magnitude on the Richter Scale, derived in 1935 by the distinguished seisimologist, Chanler F. Richter. The scale measures the strength of the seismic wave generated by the earthquake. Scale numbers range from 0 to 9. Actually there are no upper limits, although the largest known earthquakes have had a magnitude of about 8.9. The Richter scale does not, however, express the extent of damage caused by an earthquake.

The modified Mercalli Sensitivity Scale measures the intensity of an earthquake - the effects of the quake on people, buildings, and natural features. The scale is composed of 12 increasing levels of intensity, expressed in Roman numerals. The levels range from imperceptible shaking to catastrophic destruction, e.g., the 1906 San Francisco earthquake was rated XI Mercalli.

EARTHQUAKES IN THE U.S.

When we think of earthquakes in America we usually think of California. About ninety percent of earthquake activity in the continental United States occurs in California and western Nevada. Actually, no state in the nation is immune, and since 1700, about 3,500 earthquakes have been felt east of the Mississippi (although most of the quakes in the eastern states have not resulted in extensive injury or damage).

One of the great earthquakes of recent times was the so-called Good Friday earthquake of March 27, 1964. The surface point of origin was located about 75 miles (120km) from Anchorage, Alaska, and the magnitude was 8.4 to 8.6 on the Richter Scale. At Anchorage most of the damage was from secondary effects because most of the buildings had wooden frame construction. (These experience little damage when built on solid rock areas). Damage was largely from earth movement in weak clays underlying the city. When shaken, these clays developed liquid properties and allowed great segments of ground to subside and to pull apart in successive steps. This caused the tilting and rendering of houses. Additional secondary effects resulted from the rise of the water level and landward movement of large waves, destroying shipping and low-lying structures.

San Francisco lies in one of the most hazardous earthquake zones in California. In 1906 an earthquake took more than 600 lives and destroyed property estimated at $400 million. According to predictions, a major earthquake is likely to occur every 60 to 100 years in the San Francisco Bay area.[1] Therefore, we might wonder why people continue to live there despite the very real possibility of catastrophe.

Today, earthquake watchers, especially in the United States, are particularly concerned with seismic "gaps" that they have identified. Theses "gaps" are zones where stress has been building up. Often these zones have a history of earthquakes (such as the San Andreas fault). Unfortunately, it is impossible to monitor all the suspect fault systems.

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[1] Alan Backer and Stuart Lazarus, World Geography. (Science Research Associates, Inc.: Chicago, 1980)., pg. 143.

EARTHQUAKES IN JAPAN

Most earthquakes in the world occur in areas bordering the Pacific Ocean, an area often called the "ring of fire." Japan is part of this "ring." As a result, in the Tokyo area alone there are as many as forty or fifty earthquakes annually detectable by the human body. Destructive earthquakes take place about once every two years somewhere in the country. Although as many as 7,600 earthquakes may be detected each year, only about 1,500 can be felt by the human body.

The structure of the sea bed off southeast Japan contributes to frequent earthquakes in the area. An example of this is the earthquake that occurred May 9, 1974 off the southern tip of the Izu Peninsula. The quake, measured 6.9 on the Japanese scale, caused a devastating landslide that engulfed homes. In addition, roads crumbled and a lighthouse collapsed. Finally, over 100 casualties resulted.

An important secondary effect of a major earthquake is the seismic sea wave, or tsunami, as it is known by the Japanese. When an earthquake occurs in the ocean, the sudden movement of the sea floor generates a series of water waves. Although not perceptible in deep sea water, the waves travel over the ocean. When a wave hits a distant coastline it causes the water level to rise. Wind-driven waves can then cause devastating coastal flooding. Many believe that seismic waves caused the coastal flooding in Japan in 1703 that resulted in 100,000 deaths.

Japanese earthquake disasters usually fall into three classifications:

1. shaking and destruction of buildings

2. inundation and destruction of buildings and arable land in coastal areas by tidal waves

3. devastation or destruction of mountain villages, arable land, rivers or buildings, etc., by landslides, and faulting or splitting of the ground

Although rare, at least two Japanese earthquakes, the Nankai earthquake in 1946 and the Tokachi-Oki earthquake in 1953, produced all three types of destruction.

Reference: International Society for Educational Information, Inc., (Tokyo, Japan).

Handout #12

NEWS RELEASE

ıics:
:isms

Parity:
New trend in college football
— Page 20

42 pages Four sections **20 cents**

THE SUN

JAPAN THE SHAKING GIANT

OPI, Tokyo

Yesterday Tokyo shook for the third day with a reading on the Richter scale of 3.3. With all its technological might, Japan cannot control mother nature's shaking of this highly advanced Asian country.

There are over 7,500 earthquakes a year here. Tokyo's low skyline is testimony to the fear of falling buildings the people must live with. Never knowing when the next destructive quake will come, the Japanese must also look to the sea where offshore earthquakes cause tidal waves on coastal areas.

Landslides and floods add to the destruction. Japan experiences more earthquakes than any country in the world.

Handout #13

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

July 1, 1985

Dear Editor:

I am very upset by your article in yesterday's paper about earthquakes in Japan. Your exaggeration and misleading statements do a great disservice to the people of Japan and international understanding. Please let me explain:

1. Japan may have thousands of earthquakes a year, but only about fifty can be felt by humans.

2. Only once in every two or three years is there destruction by an earthquake.

3. We do have skyscrapers in Tokyo. Our advanced engineering allows us to build high, safe buildings.

Please print this letter so that your readers will not feel Japan is unsafe to visit. I lived in Japan for many years and never experienced a destructive earthquake.

Sincerely,

Joe Nasu

WILL THE REAL JAPAN PLEASE STAND UP?

STUDENT ACTIVITY

Lesson Overview: This lesson focuses on rapid change in Japan and the resulting shift from traditional to Western lifestyles. This lesson will take two to three days, depending on the time needed for research. The simulation also allows students to research changes in Japan and discuss them in an open forum.

Objectives:

To explain the concept of Westernization.
To be aware of the changes made by modernization in Japan.
To describe the Japan of today.

Materials: Handout #14, "Ministry of Home Affairs"
Handout #15, "Ministry of Education"
Handout #16, "Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries"
Handout #17, "Ministry of International Trade and Industry
Handout #18, "Prime Minister's Office"

Procedures:

1. Divide students into five groups, with each group being given one of the following identities:

   Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI)

   Ministry of Education

   Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

   Ministry of Home Affairs

   Prime Minister's Office

2. Explain to students that the "Ministries" are preparing for an evaluation of changes in Japan from post-World War II to the present. In preparation for the Cabinet meeting, each group is to use its information to research changes in Japan for its respective sector. The Prime Minister's Office receives Handout #18.

3. Have each group prepare a chart of changes that have occurred in their topic area. They will then elect a minister to represent them at a Cabinet meeting.

4. Have the ministers meet in the center of the room. In turn, each minister discusses the changes in Japan within his sector. The Prime Minister must speak last.

   Each minister must answer the charges in his/her sector. They may call upon their "ministries" for support or information.

Supplemental: THe simulation may be followed by an exercise in writing a short essay on the effect of Westernization in Japan.

MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS

Housing- Traditional Japanese homes were constructed of wood, with the roof resting on supporting wooden pillars. This allowed a large part of the outer and inner walls (consisting of sliding screens) to be removed to provide relief from the humid heat of summer. This, however, provided little protection against the winter cold. Although textbooks attribute this design to "earthquake prevention," this is not exactly correct. The traditional design simply reflected the fact that timber was generally available and summer ventilation was sorely needed. Despite the fact that wooden pillar rests swayed rather than collapsed in most earthquakes, the traditional tile roof was extremely heavy and, therefore, not "earthquake proof."

For both economic and aesthetic reasons, there was little furniture in the traditional home. Sliding screens of wood lattice covered with paper made up part of the inner walls. These could be drawn back, removed, or replaced by split bamboo screens, according to space or ventilation needs. Small spaces around the house were made into attractive gardens, and a view of the gardens from the house was an extension of the house itself.

In recent years traditional homes have become less common. Wartime destruction and rapid population flow into the cities caused postwar housing shortages. Many multistoried apartment block complexes were constructed in an effort to meet this need. The lack of land available for construction restricted the space available for each living unit. Meanwhile, improved economic status has led to a flood of electrical appliances that put even greater pressure on small quarters. Modern complaints center on the lack of space and lack of gardens. The typical apartment dweller may have only a small area or balcony where a few plants, flowers or miniature trees may be kept.

Although gradual improvement in housing is taking place, it is still not easy to abandon one's current quarters and expect to find a place significantly better. This is especially true if one has to search on one's own without the assistance of friends or relatives. Therefore, the emphasis in consumption is on improving life within the framework of existing living conditions.

The Family - In the traditional social framework,the Japanese family pattern stressed lineal descent and parental authority. The continuity and growth of the family group was stressed above the desires of the individual member. Each family member had a rank within the group, depending upon age and sex, and each had certain duties and obligations related to preserving the family unit. Marriages based upon the opinions of one's elders were the standard, rather than marriage of choice dictated by romantic love. The traditional family was a large, patriarchal unit composed of several generations living in the same household. There have been great changes, however, since World War II. The

flight to the cities has seen the disintegration of the large, patriarchal family pattern in favor of the nuclear family. This has been especially reinforced with more and more smaller housing units being built. At all social levels, the number of "love marriages" (those not arranged but decided by free choice) has increased. Even arranged marriages have changed, with both men and women free to refuse any prospective partners suggested.

In the past the patriarchal home was especially associated with rural life. Today's vertical exodus of young people has left some villages abandoned and others populated by mostly older people. Previously, filial piety (respect for elders, especially one's parents) dictated that children would always care for their parents within the home. Today the nuclear family pattern and small housing units often make this impossible.

According to current demographic estimates, Japan's population will age very rapidly from the end of the current century into the beginning of the 21st century. In 1982 the average life span of Japanese men was 74 years and that of women 79 years, making Japan one of the countries with the greatest longevity in the world.

Although the prices of land and housing are extremely high, there is still a strong desire for home ownership. In some cases this makes it inevitable that the children's family "choose" to live together with elderly parents in the family home. This is not always possible, however, and many are concerned about the future of Japan's elderly. There is an increased need for homes for the elderly and other such social welfare facilities.

Reference: International Society for Educational Information, Inc. (Tokyo, Japan).

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

The Modern Japanese Educational System - After World War II the Japanese educational system underwent drastic change in efforts to become a democratic (educational) system with equal opportunity for all, coeducation, and separation of public education from religion.

The Japanese National Constitution, under Article 23, guarantees academic freedom and further provides under Article 26 that:

> All people shall have the right to receive an equal education corresponding to their ability, as provided by law. All people shall be obligated to have all boys and girls under their protection receive ordinary education as provided for by law. Such compulsory education shall be free.

Based upon the spirit and principle of the National Constitution, the Fundamental Law of Education (Law #25), consisting of a preamble and 11 articles, was passed in 1947. Article 1, in stark contrast to the 1980 Imperial Rescript, states the aim of the modern Japanese educational system:

> Education shall aim at the full development of personality, striving for the rearing of people sound in mind and body, who shall love truth and justice, esteem individual value, respect labor and have a deep sense of responsibility; and who are imbued with an independent spirit, as builders of a peaceful state and society.

The contemporary Japanese system consists of 9 compulsory years--6 years of elementary school and 3 years of lower secondary. Admittance to the optional 3 years of upper secondary schooling is through a competitive examination. The attendance rate for compulsory education has never dipped below 99% since the end of World War II. The attendance rate for upper secondary education has dramatically increased in the post-World War II years until in 1981 it stood at 97%.

The Examination System and College Years - In the United States we speak of examination halls--in Japan they speak of "examination hell." It is during the yearly examination period that students compete for places in the country's most prestigious schools and colleges. Examinations are the key to success in Japan. At the beginning of the examination season in January, television news programs carry coverage of the application sites, and talk shows feature experts giving advice to parents. Television commercials promote guidebooks designed to help student pass examinations. Newspapers and magazines report on high schools and rate them according to their ability to advance students to college.

The stakes of the examination system are clear: if you are successful, a successful adult life awaits you; if you are not successful, the number of options in your life narrows dramatically. The pressures of this system are enormous and include bribery of officials, delinquency, student suicide, and a severe strain on family finances as parents try to pay for tutors and extra schooling.

Emphasis on entrance examinations can result in a curriculum geared to the test, emphasizing only the fundamentals, rote learning, and "teaching to the test," rather than cultivating conceptualizations and creativity. Teachers pressured to cover material often leave those who are not able to keep up behind. A recent study from the Prime Minister's office charges that only 26 percent of the students fully understand what they are taught. In addition, the examinations come at a time when students are attempting to cope with profound physical and emotional changes.

It is said that once Japanese students reach their end point--university admittance--they begin to coast. Classes are often skipped since class notebooks can always be borrowed from those who did attend class and tests can be passed through cramming. This phenomenon is exacerbated by the employment practices of many large corporations. These companies prefer to hire young graduates with limited practical or specialized experience, rather than older students with advanced degrees or working experience. These companies spend large sums to provide new employees with special trianing or further schooling tailored to the company's needs. The end result is that admittance to a specific university, rather than learning, becomes the goal of the educational system. Further, the company preference for hiring the graduate with a B.A. can be a disincentive to the student pondering pursuit of a higher degree.

The rigidity imposed by the examination system pervades the education system. Many Japanese today are seriously questioning the continued utility of their system. Among the experts urging reform is former Minister of Education Michio Nagai, who reports that college is often referred to as the "golden years for idleness" because many students know that their futures are bright. Sadako Aogata, a professor at Sophia University, charges that the examinations are not an educational tool but rather a flunking system designed to thin out the ranks of prospective university students. Critics have further charged that the present system of education does not foster creativity but stifles it.

Finally, the education of women in Japan is being questioned today. Despite the fact that women pass through compulsory and even upper secondary level in equal numbers with the men, there remains a ratio of 80-20 in favor of males at the university level. This statistic pertains to the upper level universities and does not include the many women's colleges or junior colleges. In the workplace there is little or no room for women beyond entry level jobs. The corporate attitude toward women often revolves around the cost-benefit argument. Companies refuse to recruit women for management

positions and an investment of years of training when an overwhelming number of women quit in their mid 20's to marry. Further, for those who do not quit at the time of marriage, there is the threat of "interruption of service" due to pregnancy.

It is clear that Japanese women can, and have competed with men up to the university level. At that point, however, it seems that many women set their sights on lower schooling goals and stop-gap employment. The question is, can the system afford to perpetuate this pattern? An important national resource is being underutilized. Many feel that Japanese women today want expanded employment opportunities.

Reference: International Society for Educational information, Inc. (Tokyo, Japan).

MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE, FORESTRY AND FISHERIES

Prior to World War II, Japanese agricultural production centered on the nation's staple foods--rice and wheat. Still, supplies fell about 10 percent short of demand and had to be supplemented by imports. The country was self-sufficient in the production of fruit and vegetables. Cattle were raised primarily as work animals and also supplied the small demand for beef. Although pork, chicken and eggs were produced, dairy farming was negligible.

Today agriculture has been severely affected by urbanization and industrialization. Each year the amount of land under cultivation and the number of farming households decrease. Agriculture is now on the decline. In 1950, about 45 percent of the population was engaged in farming, but today it is down to about 12 percent.

Diet - Although most books still describe the Japanese diet as consisting of mainly fish, rice and vegetables, this has changed as a result of increasing national prosperity and the importation of foods. There has been a sharp decrease in the consumption of rice, and an increase in consumption of wheat products such as bread and noodles. In similar fashion, the consumption of sweet potatoes has decreased, and consumption of meat, eggs and milk has greatly increased.

Traditionally, Japan has tried to be self-supporting by giving priority to rice cultivation. Today Japan is completely self-supporting in rice. Ironically, as mentioned above, changes in eating habits are causing rice to lose its popularity. As a result, rice is being overproduced, and new government policies are trying to diminish the increase of rice cultivation.

In the cases of most other agricultural products, Japan is not self-supporting. Japan supplies only 4 percent of its demand for wheat, 10 percent of its demand for barley and rye, and 4 percent of that for soy beans. Most of the wheat used for the now popular bread, noodles, and other wheat products, has to be imported. A survey conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture shows that the overall self-support rate is decreasing each year, and that it is much lower than that of most Western countries.

In order to supply domestic demand for grain and cereals (other than rice) Japan requires a stable import policy. Domestically, measures to stop the decline of the agricultural population are being discussed. Under the current system, many farmers cultivate their land on a part-time basis. In some cases, wives manage farms while their husbands work full-time away from the home.

Although Japan's current agricultural system seems adequate, many believe that Japan may have to switch to larger-scale, full-time farming in the future.

Communal farming practices are being considered. Long-range policies are needed to cope with the problem if food supplies are to be guaranteed in the future.

Fishing - As an island nation, Japan's fishing industry dates back to ancient times. Today, due to other countries' fishing zone restrictions, fish-farming is becoming popular. Through fish-farming, the breeding of many types of fish--notably eels--is taking place in lakes and marshy areas.

An overall perspective of today's diet patterns shows a shift from fish to meat as the preferred source of animal protein. Although this is true, the rise in the general standard of living has also increased demands for high grade fish such as bonito and tuna. A recent survey reveals that the consumption of processed foods based on fish is increasing more than that of fresh fish. One reason behind this is that much fishing is done far from the home ports of fishing fleets. The catch is then brought home in frozen form, or actually made-up into processed foods on board factory ships attached to the fleet. Another reason is that consumers prefer processed foods that are easy to handle.

There are numerous concerns about the fishing industry today. Some fear that advanced fishing techniques have led to overfishing. This is seen in the size of the fish caught, i.e., they are getting smaller. Cod and mackeral, usually eaten in their natural form, are being overfished for use in processed foods. Similarly, although the demand for sardines has diminished, huge quantities are still caught and pulverized or used as feed for other fish. Finally, there is the international movement to restrict whaling, but because whale meat plays a negligible role in the contemporary Japanese diet, there is little reason for not conforming to whaling restrictions.

Reference: International Society for Educational Information, Inc. (Tokyo, Japan).

MINISTRY OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Although Japan is the seventh most populous country in the world, its land area is very small. Japan lacks many raw materials needed for industry and energy, such as oil, coal, iron ore, copper, aluminum and wood. All of these must be imported. In order to purchase these raw materials (and other things), Japan exports a variety of manufactured goods--especially electronic equipment and cars.

Today, Japan exports goods that it can sell competitively on the international market. These goods include manufactured items, steel and cars. Japan purchases oil from the Middle East. Since the rise in oil prices in 1973, Japan has had to spend most of its international trade funds to buy oil. Middle Eastern countries cannot use all the products Japan needs to sell, so Japan has to sell its products elsewhere.

History - In ancient times the main fuels used for all purposes were wood and charcoal. Eventually, coal replaced wood-burning stoves on the northern island of Hokkaido. On the other islands, however, charcoal was the main fuel for both cooking and heating; coal burning stoves were only used to heat large public facilities, e.g., schools, government buildings and large stores.

Japan remained a leader in charcoal production and consumption much longer than other nations of the world. Even after the 1930s, when city gas became available in the larger cities, it was used mainly for cooking. Electricity was very rarely used for domestic heating or cooking. Various kinds of briquets made from smokeless coal, charcoal shavings or powdered charcoal were also widely used in homes.

Beginning in the 1950s, oil and electricity began to displace the older fuels. Oil stoves, electric kotatsu*, and to a lesser extent gas heaters were the main methods of heating. Eventually gas became the main fuel for cooking, and electricity satisfied the new demand for consumer goods. Soon most homes had electrical appliances such as electric rice cookers, toasters, heating rings, air conditioners, etc. This continues today with oil, propane gas, and where possible, city gas being used for heating and cooking.

*The kotatsu is a traditional Japanese heater which originally involved the use of a charcoal brazier placed in a sunken recess in the floor. Over this was placed a latticed frame covered with quilts. The family sat around this with everyone's feet in the sunken recess, under the quilts. Over the lattice was a board, serving as a table top. The electric kotatsu uses electricity instead of charcoal as a heat source.

Oil - Today, domestic oil output supplies barely 0.3 percent of the country's oil consumption. After World War II, Japan could not keep up with the increased demand for oil, and came to rely upon imported oil (at that time quite inexpensive). Soon industries and homes were using more power as a result of these oil imports. In the face of ever accelerating consumption, domestic oil output came to supply an insignificant percentage of total demand.

Trade - It is clear that Japan must engage in world trade in order to generate funds to purchase oil. Most of that trade has been with the United States, and has been based on the sale of automobiles. The widespread popularity of Japanese cars in the United States has led to delicate trade negotiations between the two countries. Japanese exports to the United States have significantly reduced the dominance of the United States automobile industry. To many United States citizens, the trade picture seems very imbalanced. For example, in May 1985, total Japanese exports to the United States came to $5.69 billion, while imports of United States products totaled $2.28 billion.*

In response to United States charges of unfair competition, the Japanese government (Prime Minister's Office) has launched a "Buy America" campaign. It is hoped that if each Japanese citizen annually buys $100 worth of American goods, the trade statistics will be more balanced. Meanwhile, large scale Japanese automobile exports to the United States may became a thing of the past. As of late, 1985, Japanese cars will face stiff competition from Korean and Yugoslavian cars on the American market. New export strategies will then be required.

*USA Today, June 11, 1985.

Handout #18

PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

The Prime Minister's group in the Cabinet meeting will play the "devil's advocate," blaming each of the other groups for current problems. The other groups may/may not be warned that they will have to answer the "charges."

The Prime Minister reviews problems of Japan, past and present, and then turning to each minister, blames each for the current problems (because they have not been able to remedy them).

Members of the Prime Minister's Office should have copies of the other Ministries' "briefing papers."

In addition, prior to the simulation, current articles on Japan should be collected and used by the Prime Minister's Office in preparing its "charges."

Possible Charges:

--Minister of Home Affairs is blamed for housing shortages, decline of the extended family system and lack of services for senior citizens.

--Minister of Education is charged with maintaining an unjust examination system and an unchallenging higher education system, along with unequal opportunities for women.

--Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries is blamed for the decline of agriculture and fishing and the impact of this on the food supply.

--Minister of International Trade and Industry is charged with increased dependence on foreign oil and Japan-U.S. trade friction as a result of increased auto exports.

BEYOND THIS BOOKLET

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES FOR TEACHING ABOUT JAPAN

The following pages list the addresses and telephone numbers of the Embassy of Japan in Washington, D.C. as well as all of the Consulates General of Japan. Each of these has a Cultural Affairs Section to disseminate information for teaching about Japanese traditions, customs, history, and contemporary culture.

Resources available from the Japanese government offices include a free-loan collection of films and videocassettes, reference materials, and a wide array of pamphlets and posters. Check the following pages for the office serving your area.

JURISDICTIONAL AREAS OF THE RESPECTIVE CONSULATES GENERAL
IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Embassy of Japan 2520 Massachusetts Avenue, N.W. Washington, D.C. 20008 (202) 234-2266	Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations 866 United Nations Plaza New York, NY 10017 (212) 421-9580
Consulate General of Japan Guam International Trade Center Building, 6th Floor Tamuning, Guam 96910 646-5220, 1290	Guam and Pacific Islands
Consulate General of Japan Suite 1501, 400 Colony Square Building 1201 Peachtree Street Atlanta, Georgia 30361 (404) 892-2700, 6670, 7845	Alabama, Virginia, Georgia, North Caroline, South Caroline, Florida
Consulate General of Japan 2519 Commerce Tower 911 Main Street Kansas City, Missouri 64105 (P.O. Box 13768) (816) 471-0111/2	Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, Kansas
Consulate General of Japan 625 North Michigan Avenue Chicago, Illinois 60611 (312) 280-0400	Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, Ohio
Consulate General of Japan 1830 International Trade Mart Building No. 2 Canal Street New Orleans, Louisiana 70130 (504) 529-2101/2	Tennessee, Mississippi, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky
Consulate General of Japan 280 Park Avenue New York, NY 10017 (212) 986-1600	Connecticut, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, West Virginia, District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands
Consulate General of Japan 1612 First City National Bank Building 1021 Main Street Houston, Texas 77002 (713) 652-2977, -79	Texas, Oklahoma
Consulate General of Japan Federal Reserve Plaza, 14th floor 600 Atlantic Avenue Boston, Massachusetts 02210 (617) 973-9772, 9774	Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, Massachusetts, Rhode Island
Consulate General of Japan 1742 Nuuanu Avenue Honolulu, Hawaii 96817 (808) 536-2226	Hawaii and Territories not included in the jurisdiction of the other Consulates in the United States

Consulate General of Japan 909 West 9th Avenue, Suite 320 Anchorage, Alaska 99501 (907) 279-8428/9	Alaska
Consulate General of Japan 1110 Rainier Bank Tower 1301 5th Avenue Seattle, Washington 98101 (206) 682-9107 -10	Washington, Montana, Idaho (all areas north of Idaho County)
Consulate General of Japan 2400 First National Bank Tower 1300 S.W. 5th Avenue Portland, Oregon 97201 (503) 221-1811	Oregon, Wyoming, Idaho (outside the jurisdiction of Seattle Consulate)
Consulate General of Japan 250 East First Street, Suite 1507 Los Angeles, California 90012 (213) 624-8305	Arizona, New Mexico, California (counties of: Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego, Imperial, Riverside, San Bernadino, Ventura, Santa Barbara & San Luis Obispo)
Consulate General of Japan 1601 Post Street San Francisco, California 94115 (415) 921-8000	Nevada, Utah, Colorado and California not included in the jurisdiction of Los Angeles Consulate General

ALL OFFICES COVER THEIR RESPECTIVE AREAS ONLY. PLEASE CONTACT THE APPROPRIATE OFFICE FOR YOUR NEEDS.